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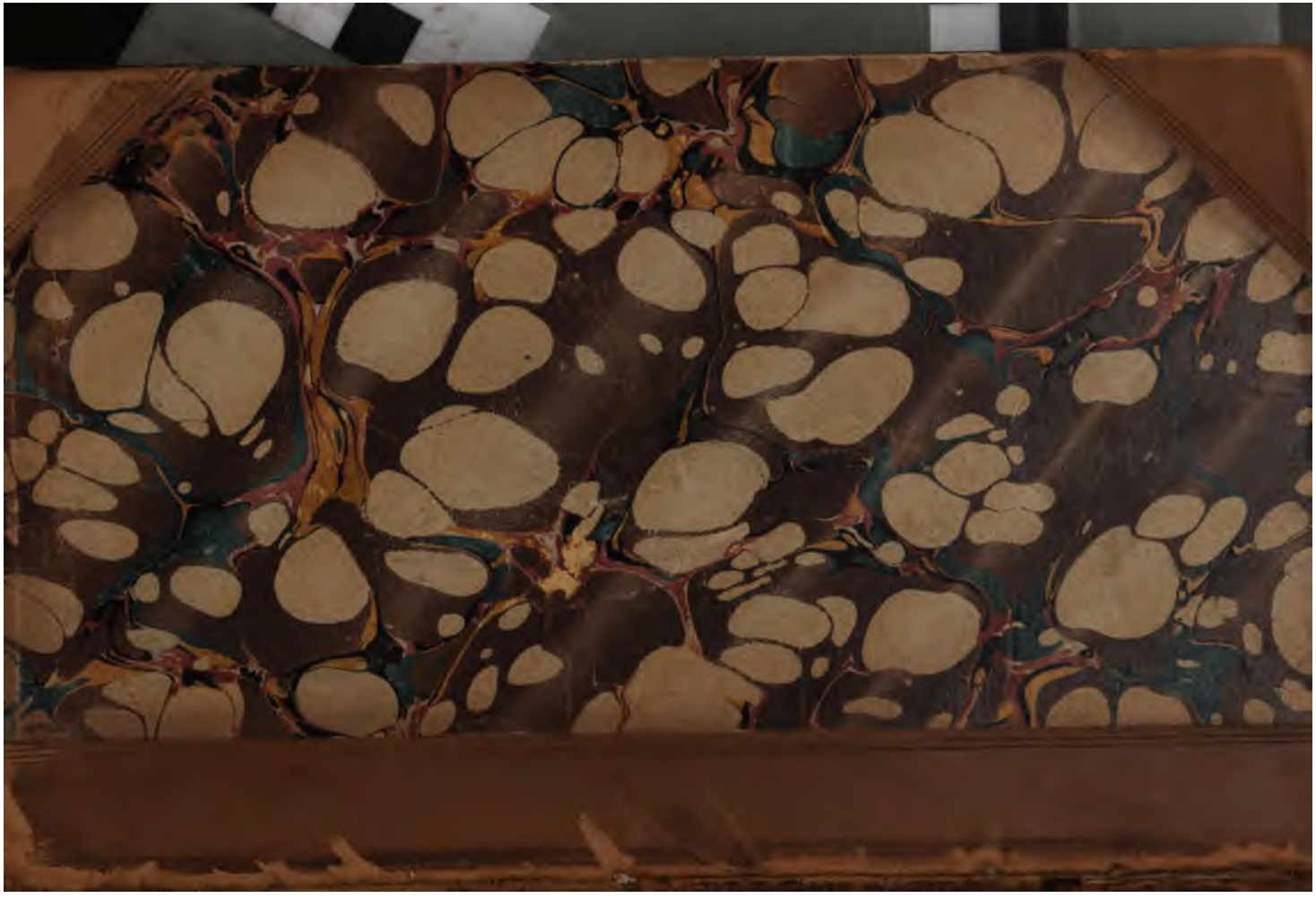

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THE WHITE MAN'S GRAVE:

A VISIT

TO

SIERRA LEONE,

IN 1834.

BY F. HARRISON RANKIN.

It is quite customary to ask in the morning, how many died last night.
M. A. FALCONBRIDGE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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His Excellency, the Lieutenant-governor of Sierra Leone, whose undaunted energy defied the worst hostility of the climate, determined, shortly after his entrance upon the duties of vice-royalty, to

visit in person the several districts of the colony, for the purpose of scrutinizing with his own quick eye the general working of the system in force, and of noticing individual cases of important detail. With such object, he took advantage of the presence of H. M.'s gun-brig, the Brisk, to coast the Peninsula from Freetown to York, and thence to proceed to the Banana Islands, an interesting district belonging to the settlement. Honoured with an invitation to accompany, I gladly hailed the opportunity of seeing a considerable portion of Sierra Leone under favourable auspices. The Brisk is a rasée, mounting two carronades and a long eighteen swivel; a class of vessels lately introduced upon this coast, and employed on the slave station to creep along shore and pry into the rivers, the haunts of those American-built clippers which are devoted to an infamous freightage.

On weighing anchor before Freetown, we stood out to the smooth Atlantic, gently

impelled by those almost imperceptible breezes which lightly skim the surface of the tropical sea, and leave it scarcely ruffled. Sierra Leone, and the shore of the Bulloms, were on either side. The accumulated mountains of the one seemed to tower in conscious dignity, as the asylum of the unfortunate and the adopted land of civilisation; whilst the low, dull shore of the savage soon sank beneath the watery horizon, and hid itself from white man's view.

Many villages were visible in the British colony: Kissey far behind, and faint; then the white church, and commissariat, and other large buildings of Freetown; the deeply projecting roofs and prominent verandahs of the English quarter amongst tall evergreens, forming a lovely picture. To the westward was King Tom's Point and the battery; then the small hamlets of Murray and Aberdeen; and upon the distant rocky hill the dark huts of Wilberforce, a newly colonised village of hum-

ble pretensions, but interesting, as perpetuating the name of the negro's earliest champion.

The languid air carried our brig so lazily, that anchor was not dropped within a couple of miles of York until the second day. It was impossible to regret that our progress had been so leisurely. Where all is burning or roasting, even the motion of a ship conveys an idea of exertion; and the land views, beautiful in the extreme, in amphitheatres of mountain and forest, would well have rewarded longer gazing. The sea, too, was glittering with the purple and golden sails of the little nautilus, or Portuguese man-of-war, as the sailors name them, fleets of which floated by us; and was ruffled by flocks of flying-fish, which, springing from the water, dart through the air like so many swallows, until they drop together into the side of a wave. Of the flying-fish I have noticed two distinct species; one large, and furnished with two pair of wing-fins, anterior and posterior; the other small, and using

a single pair only. The first was entirely silvery; the latter darker, with a brown back. I convinced myself by repeated observations of a circumstance which I have seen disputed, that, after a lengthened flight through the air, the fish would rapidly dash the end of the fin, (which, becoming dry, was losing flexibility and power of support,) into the crest of a wave, and without pause would sweep onwards with renewed vigour in a fresh curve, to the chagrin of the greedy dolphin, whose mouth was watering for a treat. On the coast of Sierra Leone, when in a boat, I have noticed flying-fish extremely diminutive, looking precisely like flying prawns; they might have been young.

The sailors amused themselves, when the wind dropped, in throwing baited lines over the rail. Their prizes were generally worthless, a jew-fish or a cat-fish, with occasionally a young ground-shark, a creature so common at Sierra Leone that I have known an instance of gentlemen leaving the table for the amusement of

spearing a shark in the shallow water which washed the extremity of the garden. The blacks are not deterred from bathing in their haunts; but that they do not indulge themselves with impunity is proved by the not unfrequent sight of men whose wounded limbs speak plainly of their rashness.

The sun's power was unpleasantly demonstrated. One of the officers had thrown a hook into the water whilst the brig lay at anchor, and had held the line with his hand exposed to the sun for half an hour; it became blistered and swollen.

Night was passed on deck, under an awning of ensigns and signals. Such nights are to be coveted by the northern landsman, who has not witnessed the hard darkness that appears to give solidity to the sky; the unrivalled brightness of the southern constellations, and their vivid reflection upon the water; where they burn steadily, and contrast with the streams of phosphoric medusæ, as they pour past like a legion of small falling stars.

A very limited portion of the Peninsula between Cape Sierra Leone and York is cleared. As we lay at sea, districts of forest on fire, wrapping the land in a mantle of smoke during the day, and glowing in streams of flame by night, denoted that cultivation was contemplated on many a wild spot. This method of preparing ground for husbandry is useful; not merely on account of the rapidity of the process, which annihilates in one common extinction forest-trees and jungle, leopards and snakes, parrots and baboons; but because the soil, either sandy, or sour with a damp covering of fallen and decayed herbage, the annual contribution of a thousand years, is much improved by the fall of wood-ashes.

The heights of York at length became visible. The breeze again dropped, and his Excellency prepared to reach the shore in the Captain's gig. A boat put off previously to announce the arrival; and, desirous of independence, I made use of it as the earliest conveyance. Six stout

Timmanees—and the Timmanees are the finest rowers upon the coast—made the boat spring gaily through the bright water; and in less than half an hour I was enthroned in uncomfortable state upon the broad bare shoulders of the black coxswain, and carried through the surge to the beach.

In this short passage from the brig a quantity of the sargasso weed floated by, harassing the oars with its dense network of yellow leaves and capsules. Whether dispersed by ocean currents, by the wind, or by natural growth, the fact of this fucus recurring at such enormous distances on the Atlantic, from America to Africa, is an interesting one. It probably covers a larger portion of the globe's surface than any other species of vegetable. In the Sargasso Sea it spreads over immeasurable fields, until the eye becomes weary of it. The question of its production and growth is a controverted one: Humboldt and others conceive it to have birth upon submarine rocks, whence being

detached it rises and floats upon the surface of the sea. The opinion, however, that it is generated and fructifies upon the water derives support from the ever-fresh and flourishing appearance of the weed. It occurs in all stages, from the simply-branched leaf to the bunch of ripe capsules; no symptom of violent abruption can be perceived; no loss of colour or of vigour indicates decay or separation from a native and congenial site. The lemna, and other floating plants of common recurrence, exclude dispute as to the possible generation of vegetables in the water.

Safely deposited from the back of my Timmanee bearer upon the white sands of York, I noted preparations for receiving the visit of the Governor with due solemnity. Ranged on the beach near the landing stood a company of negro militia, sustaining the accumulated pleasure of discipline, dust, and heat. It may not be fair to criticise the uniform of these warriors; sufficient be it to remark that

uniformity was considerably deficient. Headed by a sable martinet of sergeant's rank, the unhappy troops wore the aspect of a devoted band, standing in the furnace-flame of the sun, as stiff and erect as the trunk of a magnificent pullom-tree which taunted the poor fellows with the vicinity of its deep shade. The naked and the ragged people of York had descended to the place to witness in awe a military display, and to greet "de Gobbernaw-man" with complaints and petitions for redress. Millions of large crimson ants speckled with black were gathering on the sand, apparently to join in the grand review; wild parrots were screaming; shoals of light-hearted fish were leaping out of the waters, as if for joy; and the tribes of the sea and of the air seemed to unite with the sons of earth in testifying their gladness at the jubilee, and in welcoming the Governor.

Mounted upon the horse of the polite and estimable Manager of the district, I turned my back upon the loyal men and women, birds, beasts, and fishes; and

proceeded up a long and steep ascent, of perhaps a mile, through the wonted rows of Liberated huts, to the Government-house, which, perched on the apex of a conical hill, frowns in the dignity of stone-work upon the innumerable clusters of mud-hovels stretching far away over the cleared land beneath. Before the house paces a black sentinel, who more politely than necessarily presented arms, probably to show his military accomplishments. In front, flanked by mounds blushing with a red shrubbery of Barbadoes' Pride, is a platform with a battery of three guns. These were swallowing hearty meals of powder from the hands of black artillery-men, under the direction of the Manager's lady, Acting Commandante of the fort during the absence of that gentleman, who had taken his station on the beach below in order to receive his distinguished guest.

Politely forgiving the intrusion upon her military duties, the lady gave that unaffected and hospitable welcome which is ever a happy augury at the commence-

ment of a visit. To one, removed from any intercourse with white society beyond that of her husband, and probably not seeing at York during the entire year, ten persons who can speak English correctly, the arrival of a party of white ladies and gentlemen, some of them personal friends, had evidently been an important event. The establishment bespoke hospitable preparation; all were to be accommodated for the night; every room was rife with beds, sofas, and mattresses. Inn or caravansera there was none; nor other shelter for the accommodation of a European, unless he could be content with the school-room, or the floor of the gaol,—a taste clearly not entering into the calculations of our hostess.

A few minutes' rest afforded as much refreshment as could be hoped for whilst the air in the shade seemed borrowed from an oven. Having waited to witness the distant spectacle of his Excellency landing in the arms of a faithful black subject, and having congratulated the lady of the fortress upon the precision with which she had

discharged the eleven rounds of her artillery, I bent my steps towards a valley and rivulet at the foot of the mountain chain which terminates the heights of the Peninsula on the south. I considered it more grateful to plunge into the silent shade of the sheltering forest, and to explore those wondrous beauties of scenery that can create a thrill even in recollection; than to suffer the chance of being metamorphosed into a ragout, whilst witnessing the clumsy evolutions of the military, and the clamorous loyalty of the crowd. Nor did I covet a second toil up the scorching road to the Manager's house,—on foot too,—since the solitary horse would be honoured by the weight of a much more weighty personage.

Near the brook, walled in by high forest-trees, and approached by a narrow winding path cut through a wide belt of wild bush, and distant from the profane intrusion of the towns-people, is the burial-ground. This secluded spot, cleared of bush, in the heart of the wood, breaks unexpectedly upon the wanderer. The idea

of such a cemetery is singular, but it is singularly happy. Far from the town, shut in by surrounding "bush," it breathes the very spirit of repose and of meditation. A few lumps of unchiselled white stone mark where the dead sleep. Flowers of splendid tints spring from the sward, and evergreens protect each grave. On either side of the turf now covering the cleared space, wave the feathery leaves of the palm or cocoa-nut, and the sensitive plant is there in its native soil. Round the resting-place of the departed hang bright festoons of tropical creepers from the branches of overspreading trees to the ground, and float at every undulation of the aromatic air. "Hold your profane tongue!" I exclaimed, hurling a stone at an unsentimental monkey, in a palm above my head, who broke upon my poetry of the moment with his chatter. The brute had no desire to mingle his dust with that of his fellow-countrymen beneath, nor did he appreciate the opportunity of death on the spot of sepulture; but departed. The negroes assert that monkey-widowers de-

light in carrying off women into the palm-trees, to nurse their young, and to act as foster-mothers; and hence, say they, the milk of the cocoa-nut. Perhaps my friend was in search of a wife; and, if such were the case, I esteem myself fortunate in not having been a lady traveller.

The district of York is wide, populous, and important. It has less communication with the capital than any management in the Peninsula, owing to the distance, which separates York from Freetown by two days' journey; it is consequently thrown much upon its own resources.

The roads of Sierra Leone are as yet scarcely to be deemed facilities, and from this point Freetown is more conveniently "*caught*" by sea. This district immediately borders upon the independent savage tribes of the south, as the Sherbro's, with few means of positive defence against invasion and rapine. Its security chiefly depends upon the moral sanction of presumed superiority. The Manager of York enjoys the *ne plus ultra* of Manager's privileges,—rank, and pay. The gentleman

who discharged the complicated duties of the office at my visit had been a Missionary, and actually was a clergyman, a Commander-in-chief of the troops, a military Governor of the citadel, and a Justice of the Peace. The accumulated income of the benefice and the baton, the magistracy, and the laborious management, amounted to little more than £200 per annum.

The rare sight of a library well stocked with classical, French, German, and English literature, (a sight rare indeed even in the capital,) only made the marvel more marvellous that a European of cultivated mind could be induced to accept exile in a place almost hermetically sealed to intercourse with men of congenial habits, and apart from all that is literary, social, or improving. I believe that the same philanthropic zeal for the amelioration of his fellow-men, which led this gentleman to the shores of Africa, has detained him there.

I returned from the burial-ground and

forest wanderings to the parapet of the citadel in time to observe the pilgrimage of his Excellency and suite from the martyrdom of the militia-ground to the Manager's house. The comfortable and unostentatious tenpenny grass hat of the Governor took due precedence. Next came the palanquins of the ladies, a stripe of canvass gathered and fastened at each end to a pole, and borne on the shoulders of staggering negroes. They generally carry the feet forward, causing the head to be painfully depressed, when the lady, as in this instance, ascends a steep hill. The gentlemen followed, laboriously plunging in the deep sand; then the black soldiers straggling, no longer oppressed by musket and discipline; and, lastly, the progress of the Yorkists who thronged in the rear might be traced by a cloud of dust.

Loyalty and patriotism, according to William Pitt, have their price. The Governor had been greeted by the military, and now the military expected to be paid for the display of their respect to the

Governor. Claims for remuneration multiplied; the hour of discipline was over, and a troop of Calbongos, Jinnees, Sagos, and Ukkatas had no idea of leaving the ease of their mid-day hammocks to stand like so many Asinoos,* and be fried in the sun for sheer amusement: it might be excellent pastime to the white man to look on, beneath the shadow of wide hat and umbrella, but it excited some degree of warmth in themselves. Not a copper, however, of the colonial revenue was destined for this service, and much less pomp will probably await the next vice-regal visit.

Serious matters of business occupied his Excellency; investigation into the state of roads, the general condition of the district population, and that of the schools and of the gaol. The two first were much the same as elsewhere, in such a happy degree of imperfection as to allow scope for laudable exertions. The gaol is an apartment in the quadran-

* Elephants.

gle of outhouses lining the yard of the Manager's residence. It is a small shed guarded by a crazy door, a barrier uncommon in Africa, and even in this case a needless one; for the solitary criminal, monarch of the whole area of the prison-house, having rice and water for his support, and a mat to sleep upon, passed his hours in the ample serenity of negro enjoyment. He ate and he slept, and he laboured not. Release would have been a punishment.

The schools exhibited the degree of learning to be expected; and under the inspection of the Governor himself, and with his assistance, several children succeeded in naming some of the letters of the alphabet more or less correctly. The total want of books, beyond those of mere school instruction, would make precocious literary taste a misfortune.

An amusing spectacle was exhibited in the afternoon, when the girls of the school took their supper in the yard. The little creatures, not many of whom appeared to be

above seven or eight years of age, sat on the ground, in couples, in a semicircle. The mistress, a hideous negro maiden of thirteen or fourteen, with such an aspect as might have scared away any timid appetite, proceeded round the children, giving each couple a huge basin, heaped up above the brim with boiled rice and salt. Fingers and thumbs plunged into the savoury mess; ready hands squeezed the grain into lumps, rolled them into balls, and consigned them to oblivion. Whilst the happy little maids were thus pleasantly employed, I learned some interesting particulars of several. Many, even so young, had themselves felt the horrors of slavery, had survived the misery and pestilence of the slave-ship, and were without friends of their own tribe or relatives; others were children of those formerly liberated. Two young things, feeding from the same basin, discovered much attachment to each other. They had been ship-friends; that is, had contracted a friendship whilst fellows in misfortune in the slave-ship,

torn from all they once knew and loved. This tie having its origin in misery, is one not easily loosened. The ship-friends may be afterwards separated, but the feeling survives; and one will walk many a weary mile to attend the funeral of the other. Such growth of a feeling tender and lasting under circumstances of woe is not altogether unpoetic; it is like the bright and gorgeous tropic flower that springs up from the fallen and rotten tree.

Meanwhile the Governor was occupied in hearing complaints, and receiving petitions from any who desired to profit by an appeal to the highest authority in the colony. One of the negro characteristics is prolix talk; a failing of which his Excellency appeared aware, for with happy conciseness he despatched the conferences by few and pithy questions, or, as the black colonists said, "Gobbernaw, him make ax-palaver, then t'oder him make tell-palaver."

The complaints made during the whole excursion were very limited, and argued

general contentment. Of the two most important, one man set forth that he had a goat to sell, which no one would purchase. The man was consoled. Another presented himself to lament that he wished to buy his wife a gown but that his income denied the means. He also found consolation.

At York the instability of human affairs was illustrated. The market-clerk, a young Liberated, put in a petition. He had served long, and had discharged his duties well; but the cut-monies which constituted his salary were stated to be few, and to be capable of enduring a small increase. The Governor heard the story, and demanded whether the man intended to say that he was no longer content with his pay.

"Me work too much; money little too much."

"That is, you consider yourself inadequately paid?"

"Cut-money more do good."

Hereon his Excellency very properly

turned round to the black schoolmaster, "Cannot you," quoth he, "be market-clerk as well as teacher, for this man is discontented?"

The market-man was astounded; and, being astounded, fidgetted.

"Here," continued his Excellency to the pedagogue, "I appoint you to be market-clerk." The word went forth. The countenance of the late official fell, and his mouth essayed to open; moreover, his knees smote each other. He was cashiered, and the teacher reigns in his stead.

Amongst the spectators stood a young man whose peculiarly gentle expression might have attracted notice had it not been previously excited by his misfortune. He had lost an arm at the shoulder, by a cannon-ball from the swivel of the celebrated Black Joke, tender to the Fair Rosamond, during the engagement which terminated in the capture of the Veloz Passengera, a formidable armed slaver, on board of which the unfortunate slave had

been confined. He did not seem to consider the loss of a limb too high a price for his liberation, and evidently appreciated the privilege of a life of freedom upon British ground. The Governor humanely took his case into consideration, and suggested means of useful and profitable employment.

The fertility of the York district is great, the soil being well adapted to many valuable tropical productions. A former Manager had made a considerable sum by raising ginger, arrow-root, and other articles of consumption. No symptoms, however, at this time, did I see of cultivation, beyond the garden-ground surrounding each hovel.

The Manager at the period of my visit was of clerical and not agricultural taste; he was moreover a married man, and in such a place home has naturally more charms than the sultry mountain-side or the unhealthy swamp.

Here, more perhaps than at any other spot in the Peninsula, did the earth seem

to invite the labourer's hand. High mountains immediately overhang the town to the south, and sweep round to the east and the north, enclosing within their shelter a waving low ground of rich soil. Hill streams, never failing, water the plain; and all the bustle of commercial traffic is at the distant capital. Land may be granted at small expense, including a few shillings for registering; and labour is cheap; numerous able-bodied men would offer themselves for eight-pence or ten-pence per diem.

Whilst legions of voluntary exiles are flocking to the remote shores of Australia, losing for ever chance of return to their native land; and the cold woods of the Canadas are becoming populous with British settlers, the sole reason why the more fertile, more luxuriant districts of this romantic colony, never enter into the dreams of the agricultural emigrant, must be sought in the fact that he is not aware of the facility with which an estate may be obtained; or that he is terrified by the

unhealthy reputation of Sierra Leone; a reputation founded upon early and insulated casualties, magnified by the love of enhancing what is terrific, and maintained by policy on the one hand and ignorance of the truth on the other.

A principal drawback upon the success of the Canadian and Australian colonists consists in the scarcity and price of labour, the very last that could be urged against Sierra Leone. That personal exertion which is long in furnishing even the melancholy comforts of a loghouse, would be unknown. A market would be at hand for the ready disposal of the most valuable products of the earth. Indian-rubber, now becoming an article of vast consumption, vanilla-nut, palm-oil, coffee, indigo, gums, jesuit's bark, jalap, and a variety of drugs and dyewoods, grow spontaneously in the wild luxuriance of nature. Sugar, cinnamon and other spices, have been found to thrive well; whilst tobacco, the medium of exchange with the various tribes beyond the bounds

of the colony, is in fact a vegetable money, of which every man might possess his own mint; and the emigrant would find less need of gold and silver in his dealings than in any other British possession. At present, none of the exports from the western coast of Africa to England are the results of cultivation; whatever stores the merchant freights have either been gathered from the forest or separated from the gold-bearing sands of the stream. The latent wealth of an uncultivated soil has not been developed.

I could not help indulging in a fanciful vision of a white settlement at York. The "mind's eye" beheld the comfortable home of an industrious and thriving farmer, speedily raised by the willing exertion of black labourers, sheltered by the orange and lime trees of this evergreen land: the farm-yard well stocked with the diminutive poultry and the stately Muscovy duck; the small Foulah cattle, exactly similar to the best Alderney breed; and those glossy piebald sheep

which seem to partake of the nature of the antelope as well in flavour as in form; with the funky or granary filled with maize, millet, and corn. Beyond the homestead, were pictured fields of sugar-cane and indigo, and plantations of cotton, whilst the hill-sides bristled with the stiff but generous coffee-tree.*

In sober earnest, however, a community of industrious whites would meet with unusual advantages to themselves, but would especially tend to raise the colony in value; blessing at the same time with the example of intelligence, system, and improvement, a daily increasing population of free blacks.

Little good can be at present expected from Sierra Leone in regard to produce; and, beyond a certain point, little as to

* An Arabian traveller states that the true tea-tree of China grows abundantly on the banks of the Joliba: the sources of this river are distant about thirty miles from those of the Rokel, which empties itself into the Sierra Leone estuary at the eastern point of the colony.

the amelioration of its inhabitants. No efficient means are employed to ensure the one, and none at all to encourage the other. The settlement of Sierra Leone does not embrace in its primary object white colonisation; and it is only equitable that, in all which concerns the colony, the welfare of the Liberated, whose asylum it is, should be steadily held in view. Nothing could more effectually conduce to this end than intercourse with the whites, for men ever practise more readily from example than from precept. Nor can the territory be considered too limited to admit of white immigration; tracts of valuable country have been offered to the English and refused by them; and belts of land on either side of the Peninsula, north, south, or east, might be obtained by treaty.*

* The more independent mode of acquiring territory from savages, by *exterminating* the useless and uncivilised natives, practised in Van Diemen's Land and other colonies, might not succeed

amongst the innumerable hordes of Nigritia. Late accounts represent the aboriginal possessors of Van Diemen's Land to have been at length happily annihilated, with the exception of a single family, since the amicable arrival of the Christian strangers.—*Sun Newspaper*, July 8, 1835.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BANANA ISLANDS.

Their healthy character.—Favourite resort of Europeans.—Town of Dublin.—Curious feudal Tenure of Goats.—Pilgrimage to the city of the White Ants.—Independence.—Boog-a-boogs and Goblins.—Notice of White Ants.—Their different Species and Nests.—Warlike Ant.—Interior of the great Cone.—Turret Nests.—Travelling Ants—Their Passage of Rivers.—A Bathe.—Black Timidity.—Thoughts on Complexion.—Origin of Black and White.—Piebald Men.—A Joke in the Woods.—Lesson on Mechanics.—A Night Walk.—Geology.—Volcanos.—Village of Ricketts.—Wild Assemblage.—A Feast.—A Leper.—Singular Triple Palm-tree.—A Stroll in the Forest.—Shrubs.—Palm Wine.

THE early morning sun had scarcely risen above the mountain ridge behind York, when the party were once more upon the blue water of the Bay, bending their course towards the Bananas. This

chain of islands runs out to sea for some leagues from the Cape, of which they were probably a continuation at an earlier period of the world. One only is inhabited. Originally they belonged to the Sherbro' Bullom chief, Caulker, but are at present the property of a white colonist, who purchased them. The British Government rents them at a charge of about fifty pounds per annum, for the location of captured slaves; and they form a district of Sierra Leone under a distinct Manager, who, like the magistrate of York, is a theologian of considerable attainments, and combines military command with civil authority.

The fertility, romantic interior, and soft luxury of a healthy climate discovered in the Bananas, the Isles of Wight of Sierra Leone, had been mentioned with enthusiasm before me so frequently that I wisely expected disappointment: but there was none; no description had been worthy, no praise could be suf-

ficiently eloquent. The remembrance of those delicious islands comes upon me with a bright glow as warm as the recollection of a happy day in early childhood.

Hither it is not unusual for the residents of Freetown to repair for some weeks in the course of the year, for the enjoyment of a more temperate atmosphere, the quiet of seclusion, and the healthful rambles in the deep and wooded valleys. Sportsmen may indulge their heroism by attacking the wild bulls, which formidable animals roam in herds in undisputed possession of some of the more westerly of the Bananas; or, if his heart fail him, he may find ample scope for skill in the more prudent pursuit of the great sea-eagle, the white tropic-bird, the green woodcock, or the dove, and countless birds of that exquisitely painted plumage which a northern sun cannot tint. The invalid, the naturalist, the man of taste, and even the simply idle, having once

visited the Bananas, will desire to see them again.

Dublin, the largest of two settlements, and upon the largest of the islands, is the seat of local government. The name may have been appropriately given on account of the surpassing grandeur of the bay, a rival, to say the least, of that celebrated sweep of the sea which graces the Irish capital. The town expands over a flat ground that slopes gradually on one side to the beach; and, excepting that the huts seemed still less crowded than on the continent, no novelty in plan or in building was apparent. As usual, the only stone-built house was the mansion of the Manager. Multitudes of sheep, with coats sleek as that of a race-horse, marked with black and snow-white patches, and vivacious goats, were frolicking in the vicinity.

The goats are particularly numerous, indeed innumerable; and reminded me of the countless and unowned dogs which infest the streets of Eastern cities. They

are a property of the inhabitants, held on a strange tenure, indeed perfectly feudal, in one of the very last nooks on earth's surface where anything feudal would be expected. They were introduced into the island by the Manager for the time being in years gone by. As they multiplied excessively, far beyond the wants of his own dairy, he entered into a compact with the negroes convenient to either party. The goats and their posterity were granted to the town's-people on stipulation that he himself, and his successors for ever, should be sufficiently supplied by them with milk on demand; any individual being liable to an order for a day's supply at the option of the Manager.

Having witnessed the examination of boys at the public school until the heat became insupportable, notwithstanding a circulation of air through the wicker walls and slight frame roof, through whose apertures the rays of the sun streamed as through a solar microscope, curiosity

led me to examine the plain in the neighbourhood, celebrated for its stupendous nests of the great white ant, stretching far on every side like a prodigious encampment. Two blacks were readily found to act as guides, and for the equally necessary purpose of carrying my fowling-piece and ammunition, and such clothing as became superfluous when beyond the critical notice of European eyes.

There is a luxury in stepping forward freely in a glowing climate, released from the restraint of sartorial bondage; the neck no longer tightly bandaged, the limbs independent, the feet emancipated from a leathery vice. It is especially exhilarating to ramble in this manner, where everything around is rioting in the wild and joyous freedom of nature; when a pardonable enthusiasm for the natural, delights in obliterating for the moment every possible memorial and badge of the artificial.

In less than half an hour the path brought us through a space of stunted bush

and dry grass to the city of the industrious. On every side rose the habitations of the white ant, one of the most astonishing productions of instinct and labour that the insect race has accomplished.

Of the African white ant there are several species, differing in many essentials, but most obviously in the structure of their dwellings. Of these, three species came under my observation in the Bananas, and two others upon the continent. The interest attaching to these remarkable insects will justify a slight notice of them. The name of Ant is improperly given to the genus, which is correctly designated *Termes*. A cursory glance at its form and its habits would at first suggest a resemblance to our well-known emblem of persevering prudence, which closer investigation denies. The natives universally call the whole tribe Boog-a-boog, and stand in much awe of the little furies, considering them to be diminutive goblins, the familiars of the evil spirit: and the negroes frequently erect over

their nests a shelter or temple, a Sataka, sacred from the intrusion of the *profanum vulgus*, death being the penalty; and annually sprinkle an offering of blood from a white cock, some rice, and salt. From the similarity of sound, it is not improbable that the nursery term for an object of horror, a *bug-a-boo*, has been derived from this source.

Like the ants, the boog-a-boogs, or termites, associate for the purpose of co-operation in collecting food and in raising their lofty habitations: in the details of life they more closely resemble the honey-bee, their community at large containing individuals distinguished by three aspects or functions,—the queen, the workmen, and the soldiers or drones. Their labours are severe; for their edifices require the utmost advancement in insect architecture to be accompanied with long exertion, and the quantity of food for so numerous a community can only be obtained and stored by the most scientific application of insect principles of political economy.

The three species which I noticed upon the Bananas were the *termes bellicosus* or great white ant, whose gigantic conical edifices of red earth, reaching the amazing height of from ten to fifteen feet, and having a circumference of from twenty to thirty feet, with a base covering nearly two hundred cubic feet of ground, are ranged in endless heaps upon the plain near Dublin. The ant which builds its fairy abode on the branch of some forest tree, and carries a covered way of clay from the earth up the trunk and along the boughs to its wasp-like nest, is called the Tree Boog-a-boog. The third kind was that extraordinary insect, the Turret-nest Ant, whose home is a column crowned with a spreading conical roof. The most formidable of this* atrocious race is the Travelling Ant, *termes viarum*, which marches onward, bent upon desolation and destruc-

* The scientific designations of three termites convey an idea of their ferocity—termes *bellicosus*, termes *mordax*, termes *atrox*, termes arborum, termes viarum, &c.

tion, in a right line ; no wall, no house, no river impeding the progress of the legions. Their armies I had the chance to fall in with between Magbelly and Royell in the Timmanee country, and did not escape without a dishonourable wound in my hasty retreat; they are sometimes encountered in Sierra Leone. They frequently invade a house, which is instantly forsaken by its inhabitants. After an abode of a day or two, during which every apartment is filled with the visitors, their myriads, having consumed whatever their "*dura ilia*" can digest, move onward, and not one remains. On their departure no living thing is found in the dwelling; and as cockroaches, scorpions, tarantulas, crickets, and vermin are painfully populous in tropical domiciles, the transitory invasion is forgiven which exterminates more permanent pests. The habits of this species court further investigation. At the island of Tombo they are occasionally seen ; but, partaking of the restless propensities of the ever-wandering Jew, their visits are

at intervals and uncertain. The house in which I enjoyed the hospitalities of the excellent white man who resides on that island had been several times carried by storm, and had been abandoned by its owner at the approach of the unbidden guests. They arrived from the continent; and, on leaving Tombo, again passed the broad stream of the Mitomba. The mode in which these insects float across water was stated to me to be the following; which, although admitting of doubt, and not ascertained by acknowledged naturalists, must be mentioned as an opinion prevalent on the spot; and, to say the least, is not more repugnant to credibility than the voyages of the lemings. The travelling ants collect together by the river side, and form themselves into large balls; they then trust themselves to the stream and are floated to the other side, a portion of the ball being above the surface and a portion beneath it. Whether their centres of repulsion radiate farther than those of atoms in general, or whether they have

a power of exuding air from the pores of their horny skin (for globules of air are attached to the ball), they land and unroll themselves unwetted and vigorous. Without doubt, in ferrying themselves across a wide river, they must study the wind; and the larger the ball, the greater the effect upon it by the current of air. It is possible that, in rolling themselves into masses, instinct has regard to the operation of the wind only; individuals might float for an equal length of time, but would be borne down unresisting by the stream.

On approaching the extensive plain on the Bananas covered by the pyramids of the varlike white ant, it seemed as though a native town was near; the colour and the shape of the structures being much like the native huts. It is not at all more probable that the first notions of Gothic architecture were derived from the interlacings of a [illegible] as antiquaries [illegible]

from the cones and turret-nests of the boog-a-boog.

On the summit of the first ants' nest flourished an ash-tree, and upon its sides grew the red satin-berried shrub which negresses patronize to polish their white teeth; and it is no uncommon sight to see a wild bull, the leader and guardian of the herd, taking his station on the top of an ants' nest, when upon the look-out, as on an elevated watch-tower.

Curiosity plunges into petty dangers. Desirous to examine the workings of the ferocious community of a large cone of the *termes bellicosus*, I ordered the men to break into it. From religious awe of the evil sprites, or from physical precaution, they refused: thrown upon my own resources, I commenced assailing the fabric with a large stake; and as the mound of earth, though compact, was brittle, a considerable breach was soon effected in the outworks. The interior consists of large chambers, communicating by passages artfully laid. A great portion of the inner

surface of these tunnels, and of the chambers, appeared to be encrusted with a glutinous coating. The same adhesive matter occurred in several of the masses of hard earth, and is probably used, with the sagacity of instinct, to bind together more firmly the several particles of which the walls and substance of the structure are composed; it is an animal cement. In one of the most secure rooms the queen maintains her state: her offspring, painfully numerous, are distributed through the various galleries, and doubtless marvel at the preposterous dimensions of their revered parent, who measures from twenty to thirty thousand times the bulk of her child, and is several hundred times larger than her royal consort the king.

The labourers are small, but many; they are less than a quarter of an inch in length. The state is a military government; and the labouring classes are compelled to work, and protected from injury by a powerful body of soldiery,—a band of ants much larger than the work-

men, with horny frontlets armed with pincers, an over-weighty and inconvenient armour. The soldiers are a kind of monstrosity; the head and assailing members being excessively developed, whilst the eyes either see not at all or imperfectly, and the legs find difficulty in carrying the cumbrous heads.

Upon breaking into the first gallery, a loud hiss proceeded from the thousands who were taken by surprise; a multitude of vindictive heads presented themselves; and the vanguard pushed out innumerable skirmishers in every direction, rendering temporary retreat advisable. In a few minutes, when quiet was restored, I broke further into the cone, and distinctly saw two bodies of boog-a-boogs, one retreating, the other boldly advancing to the attack. The warlike band was the soldiery; that which sought safety in retreat, the workmen.*

* To detail the operations of the besieged throughout my storm of their peaceful town, would be to recapitulate facts recorded elsewhere. Instinct

In the first cavity, communicating with the exterior of the pyramid, lay a huge scorpion, which had recently cast its skin. The membrane was entire and transparent, and had a more harsh and formidable appearance than the naked, pulpy creature itself, which remains soft until again case-hardened by time.

This boog-a-boog consumes two or three years in completing its stately citadel, and soon afterwards the whole community perishes. Of the thousand tumuli, therefore, which cover this interesting plain, many are in progress, and many are abandoned. Upon the last a vegetable clothing immediately flourishes. In a wood contiguous to the plain, I passed by the largest turret-nest that I saw in Africa. In pursuit of a tremendous guana, which dashed into the bush at the sound of footsteps, I

is uniform in its impulses; and probably all who have systematically examined the interior of the great cones, under similar circumstances, have witnessed similar scenes. Accurate accounts have been published in the Philosophical Transactions by several travellers.

fell upon this curious abode of the other species of white ant. It was from four to five feet in height, and nearly two feet in diameter, surmounted by a conical roof, of very obtuse vertex, whose eaves projected several inches beyond the shaft of the column. These roofs are admirably adapted to preserve the complicated structure beneath from the violent fall of rains in the wet season. A smart kick will break the nests in two, and discover the simple arrangement of the apartments within, a bundle of perpendicular perforations of small bore throughout the stem. The turret-nest ants are smaller than their congeners of the pyramids; but are equally deficient in suavity of disposition, and in forbearance under injury. The clay employed by them in the construction of their mushroom-like abodes is of a bluish grey; the cones of the great white ant are formed of a red earth.

The travelling boog-a-boog differs from its kin in the circumstance of a subterranean resting-place, and a life of per-

petual journeyings; they are the Ca- mucks and Bedouins of their race. A mor- e audacious assailant, it is not content wit- h repelling attacks, but marches over hil- l and over dale, seeking whom and what i- t may destroy. I shall not trust myself to- o describe a species from which I sustained- d personal injury; my opinions might be- e unfavourably biassed by the recollection of- f the unworthy conduct of an individual.

If in the teeming forests of Africa the grander or more terrific offspring of nature strike more wonder upon the sense, reflection will assign no mean interest to the dwellings, the habits, and the instinct of the termites.

After spending some hours in the vast city of cones, I followed the guide to a romantic nook on the sea-shore, of difficult access, shut in by a belt of aloes, pulloms, wild tamarinds, and palms. This was the haunt of a multitude of birds both woodland and aquatic; small doves were particularly numerous in the branches; the shallows were thronged

vith waders, busily engaged in swallowing he fish, whose dense shoals rendered the ask of fishing an easy one. A large bird, black marked with white, was wheeling over the scattered ledges of rock, barely beyond the range of my piece; it continued with tantalizing caution at an even distance, often alighting, but gliding away upon my approach; from the head and neck it seemed to be a species of huge vulture.

At the discharge of the gun, the men were fearfully alarmed, and hid themselves behind the jutting rocks when they expected to hear the report. But their unsophisticated nerves were destined to a more severe trial when the cool, rippling sea tempted me to bathe, despite of the chance of sharks. The two negroes, who had never beheld the person of a white man, looked on with uneasy curiosity during the preparation; and as by degrees fresh portions of the white man's limbs became exposed to view, they shrunk backwards further and further from me, eyeing the monster with fixed eyes, until,

when I was reduced to their own standard of dress, they literally scampered off, and hid themselves in the wood. The eldest was peculiarly agile and noisy, and screamed when I pretended to follow him. The sight of this overpowering terror of a white man afterwards became familiar to me; and in a subsequent excursion nearly proved fatal to a Timmanee whom I accidentally met.

What is physical beauty? Has it other existence than as habit defines it? We are taught to picture the Evil one as black. The African is certain that Satan is white. White physiologists may assert that mankind was originally fair, but that a torrid sun has darkened many of Adam's descendants. Black physiologists take a different view, and state our race to have been at first black. Cain, the first murderer, was a negro, say they; but he became so pale with fear and remorse, that his colour never returned; and that leprous whiteness so abhorrent, so disgusting, stamped as a lasting mark upon

his face, distinguished him and his descendants for ever,—a comfortable theory! The European, in constant intercourse with the African, loses much of his distaste for the sable skin, and occasionally acquires a positive preference. The reverse is not so common. The negro complexion is more uniform, and less rough than that of the children of the north, and the skin has the softness of velvet; and when the eye has become accustomed to favourable specimens of the ripe chestnut, brown or ebony, a fair face conveys the idea of sickliness. That our cold colour is the result of disease, is the first impression of the African. Yet not only negro, but white physiologists have been found, who held the opinion that the human race was originally black. One fact is certain, that whilst white parents are never blessed with black offspring, children are born of black parents sometimes entirely white, sometimes brown, of every shade between the opposite extremes, and sometimes piebald, with patches of the

different colours living together like countries upon a map: a singular instance of a natural harlequin which I have twice met with, one being the head-man of a native village. It is therefore possible that physiologically speaking, the fairest beauty is the greatest monstrosity.

On turning a corner in the narrow bush-path, whilst wending my way back to Dubrin, a party of blacks came in view. One leviathan of a fellow in advance carried an old musket above his head, holding it with extended arms in the manner of the Mandingo chiefs; his prudent friends followed at a long interval. Accosting the naked sportsman, I took his heavy piece of ordnance to examine its virtues. Its rusty barrel was loaded to the depth of eight or nine inches, dooming its bold owner to every chance of self-destruction on its discharge. I raised it to my shoulder with difficulty, and pointed it at him. He cried out lustily, and plunged into the bush, imitated by his companions. In vain my laugh, and that of the guides,

proclaimed the joke; in vain I shouted invitation to return and receive the musket again. No one appeared until after a considerable time. We proceeded onward with the prize. Half an hour might have elapsed when the head of a man was perceived cautiously projecting, like a black boog-a-boog nest, from behind the trunk of a large tree at the path-side, the eyeballs starting out of their sockets, to watch our progress and intent. I beckoned with friendly gesture, and instantly the fungus head and chalky eyes vanished. The game of hide and seek, long continued, grew tedious. Despatching one of my negroes, with the injunction to restore the instrument of death to his countryman, I returned to the hospitable mansion of the Manager, impressed with the painful evidence that even in a British settlement social principles were so little understood, and that the fact of personal security was but vaguely recognised. The white man had been considered quite capable of an intention to commit a wan-

ton act of barbarity upon a black man. The chief acquaintance which the negroes have had with Europeans lamentably sanctions so ill an opinion of them. It will require centuries spent in philanthropic exertions on our part to remove this deeply-rooted ill opinion. Even in Sierra Leone, where Europeans are most numerous, and where their good intentions are best appreciated, I have sometimes found them regarded as harsh and cruel; and in a neighbouring independent nation they were generally designated as rapacious and blood-thirsty, with but few honourable exceptions.

An unimportant circumstance happened in the afternoon, but one not without interest, inasmuch as it exhibited the total ignorance of mechanical aid amongst the natives, and their surprise at the simplest use of it.

In one of the street-roads of the town, lined by huts, lay a heavy block of stone; and there it might have remained undisturbed perhaps for ages. The gallant Com-

mander of the Brisk, however, jocosely undertook to mend the thoroughfares of Dublin, and called upon several idlers to roll away the impediment. Hand and shoulders were applied, but the stone would not stir from its resting-place; and, after many efforts, the Bananians gave up the attempt, exclaiming "Stone live there,—no love walk." Hereupon the spirited officer grasped a good tough stake, and requesting the lubbers to look at *him*, inserted the end of the lever beneath the refractory mass, and lo and behold! the astonished crowd saw the stone "love to walk," for it rolled fairly over. Its mobility having been demonstrated, the engineer triumphantly threw down his lever, and departed with stern command that the work commenced should be forthwith completed by his black pupils. The lesson was a useful one; it conveyed an important principle.

This want of mechanical knowledge amongst the Africans is remarkable. In Freetown, where heavy goods are ex-

ported (and imported to a large amount,) the public wharf or quay is without a crane; and the sound of wheel of cart or waggon is never heard. Strength and excessive exertion are the substitutes, and poor ones are they. Where articles can be carried by single men, a ship's cargo is transferred to the warehouses by the repeated journeyings of many individuals. Twenty or thirty thousand bricks, for instance, when landed, are borne in this manner upon the heads of Kroomen, eight or ten bricks being the load of each; the number of passings and repassings may be imagined. When any ponderous article, as a piece of ordnance, requires the united strength of many to drag it, a singular want of simultaneous co-operation is evident. What, however, is wanted in union, is compensated by noise. Thirty or forty men, pulling at various ropes, rend the air with an unceasing repetition of a strange exhortative monosyllable, "quack, quack, quack, quack," in every intonation of the voice.

When the moon had risen, and the rest f our party had closed their eyes to arthly things, my Freetown host pro-osed a moonlight walk through the town. All was quiet and repose ; no dance-song roke upon the stillness, and not a being n motion was to be seen. The air was close, but free from the maddening heat of the day. Cottages and trees threw a dark shade upon the ground. Well did the poet compare the beauty of the Jewish maiden to the

> " Night
> In starry climes and cloudless skies."

Hut after hut presented the same spectacle, of men and women, boys and girls, lying in confused groups asleep, under shade of the rude piazza, unclothed and in the open air. The negroes fear to sleep in the moonlight ; they consider that blindness ensues. Now and then the father of a family rested in his net-work hammock, suspended from the eaves of the hut, his legs and arms hanging down on either side. None arose as we passed

by; a few only lazily turned their heads for a moment to look at us, and closed their eyes again. Sleep is the negro's sixth sense. How different is the state of a European town at the same hour of night! and how much less tranquil the scenes that arrest a wayfarer's attention! The touching silence, the universal repose, the forms of simple beings resting in the open air, the unclosed door of the unguarded dwelling, are not known in the countries where morals retreat before the advance of knowledge and of intellect; where vice only shuns the light lest it should be counteracted.

At the outskirts of the town, where the ground suddenly fell into a sort of amphitheatre of naked sand, the scene was totally changed. Instead of the indolent quiet which spread over the town, loud shouts told of some commotion. We discovered a throng of Kroomen. Chance had led them to visit the Bananas on their long voyage, and they were commencing their favourite contests. The extrava-

gant vaunting and gesture preceding the wrestling, as well as the actual struggle for mastery, made the time float by imperceptibly until night had far advanced. The season of night, the wild forms and wilder sports, the murmur of the surf so white in the moonlight, the bold evidence of a tropical climate in every production around us, gave a thrilling interest to the moment. Many a champion encountered an antagonist worthy of his might; many a gallant Kroo was hurled into the air, and fell rolling in the dust he had so lately spurned with his contemptuous toe. Looking upon the fine forms of these men, perfect models of the human figure, writhing and throwing themselves into every noble attitude in contention for bodily superiority, I involuntarily thought of the classic sports of the Pancratium. The scene was classically Greek, too, in other respects; for amongst the spectators were many young maidens, full of glee and brisk as palm-wine, who, in good-humoured imita-

tion or quiz of the Kroomen, would jocosely seize upon each other and struggle for the fall, with as much merry earnest and quite as little drapery as belonged to the Spartan maiden athletes of old. That such inferior animals as women should presume to imitate manly feats drew down merited censure of course; it was certainly impertinent, but I thought scarcely deserved so severe a rebuke as the violent blows which they received for their presumption.

On the following day we visited the village of Ricketts, situated upon the same island, but towards the western extremity. Our short voyage from Dublin was soon over; and, on landing at the sequestered settlement, the volcanic origin of the islands struck me as probable. Trap rocks broke from beneath the luxuriant vegetation which rioted to the edge of the sea; the deep fissures of the rock were filled up with a red mineral conglomerate in which iron abounded. This substance had evidently been poured down from the

mountain in a state of fusion; the streams and the direction of their currents were obvious. A similar surface covers many of the lower portions of the Peninsula of Sierra Leone, the truncated cones of whose mountains favour the idea of extinct volcanoes. The next rising land which I saw, starting from the flat alluvium that extends in nearly one extensive plain for several hundred leagues north and south of Sierra Leone, presented a very similar character. It was at the great falls of the Rokel, below Rokilma, in the Timmanee country. The sides of the deep chasm down which the river tumbles presented imperfect columns of basalt, and created a strong similarity between these cataracts, the most stupendous on the western coast of Africa, and the Tees High Force. Little is known of the sweep of country from this point through the north-west, until the range of the Sangaree mountains near the coast offers actual proof of the existence of volcanoes. Within the extensive semicircle marked

by these volcanic points, it is possible that others may exist; but as yet neither the Soosoos, the Bulloms, Foulahs, Timmanees, nor Krangos have discovered a taste for geology, and their portion of the earth remains to be investigated.

The few frame and clay huts which form the village of Ricketts, nestle at the foot of abrupt and lofty hills. A village more rude and desolate, in a situation so beautiful, I had never seen, nor may I expect to see. Two noble trees, side by side, throw aloft their plentiful foliage in the centre of an open space within a few yards of the shore; around the vacant area are ranged the huts of the Liberated, and continue straggling in one or two directions towards the forest. No white man dwells here, and one is seldom seen. Whilst the party was sitting beneath the shelter of the monarch tree, whose branches were studded with hundreds of hanging nests, and enlivened with the ceaseless chatter of a legion of fluttering birds, the dingy population collected to examine the

strangers. Every hut around presented masses of strange beings looking on at a cautious distance in silent curiosity; mothers were holding up their children to see us, and many an old grey-haired man leaning on his staff gazed upon the novelty with childish interest. By degrees they acquired courage: several came forward offering fish, fowls, and Muscovy ducks, alive and struggling, for barter; signs being for the most part the sole intelligible language.

Amongst the most inquisitive and unceremonious was a most miserable object, a man whose face and person were rough and whitened with leprous disease; the rest of his people seemed to shun him. The sight of provisions had attracted him towards our rude table beneath the tree; no hint from gesture could induce him to withdraw, considerably to the annoyance of the ladies: at length, upon symptoms of necessary violence being shown, he slowly left us to hide his sickening form in a solitary hovel, at the skirts of the wood,

in a contrary direction to the populous part of the village.

Nothing in the conduct or appearance of the people at Ricketts indicated departure from the common usages of savage life, excepting the open garden spaces between the huts and a few poultry. Attempt at dress was by no means general amongst our fellow British subjects there; indeed less so than in any of the towns which I had visited in the Peninsula of Sierra Leone, and even less than in the larger towns of the independent tribes near the colony. When our slight repast was ended, a universal rush took place towards the table, of the Rickettsians, who had hitherto remained huddled together beneath the piazzas of the surrounding huts watching the process of mastication: a furious scramble ensued for the fragments; men tore scraps of food from the hands of the women, and battled amongst themselves for a crust; when such as were fortunate in acquiring possession of it, ran away into the bush to devour it alone,

not without pursuit; as a dog slips away with a stolen bone.

Near the town of Ricketts is a palm-tree with three heads. The palm, the most interesting of the tropical sylva, springs like a crown of feathers from the ground, and perpetually pushes up new, larger, and loftier leaves from the centre, as the outer and lower ones fade and die. In course of years, the stalk—for, as there are no branches, it cannot be called a trunk—elongates, rough below with the prominences of the withered leaf-stalks, and above bearing, as at first, a single head of central vegetation. This explanation will make the singularity of the triple-headed palm-tree at Ricketts intelligible. It is the result, and a very uncommon one, of the peculiar arrangement of vessels in the tree, which belongs to a section of the vegetable world distinguished by the prevalence of a triple number in the developement of its parts; five being usually discovered in the

largest and most conspicuous productions of the temperate climates.

As there was little worthy of lengthened notice in Ricketts, we passed the greater part of the day in the neighbouring woods, through which a narrow path has been cut leading across the island to Dublin. The forest occasionally opened into natural shrubberies, where the more massive trees receded. Nearly every plant was new to me, and bore some gorgeous flower, some cooling fruit, or fantastic leaf. The negroes are good practical botanists; no licentiate is better skilled in simples than a black doctor, invariably an old woman; and every native boy finds in the bush a thousand berries pleasant to his taste, or refreshing to his parched lips. Of these is the orange-coloured fruit of the wild plum, and a black juicy food growing upon a large tree whose name it would be impossible to spell, it contains one or two seeds imbedded in a white pulp, and is an agreeable acid: the Maroon fruit, a small clustered currant; and other fruits

of pleasant coolness and acidity. When exposed to out-of-door heat, a knowledge of these plants is useful: many tempt the eye, which would prove poisonous; and many an unostentatious leaf or berry cools and invigorates.

Our wanderings were as full of interest from the splendour of scenery, as they were deficient in incident and adventure. The only human beings encountered in the forest path were some men bearing home palm-wine, distilled from holes cut into the palm-tree during the night. The meeting was opportune, and the foaming calabash freely parted with its contents; a trifle being received with gratitude as a generous recompense to the owner for his toil in ascending the perilous height to drain the sap.

Until white men introduced cheap rum, the natives confined their taste for intoxicating liquids to this, which is procured at the expense of too much trouble and in too limited a quantity to cause much injury. If rum has found its way to the

simple inhabitants of the Banana Islands, it as yet has not become an article of such easy acquisition and general consumption as at Freetown. No rum-shop met my eye either at Ricketts or at Dublin; probably the community is too poor to tempt the merchant. Should it prosper and become as civilised as the capital of the colony, and invite the residence of white men, this island may possibly discard habitual sobriety when it loses its other savage characteristics, and may sink into intemperance as it rises in civilisation.

CHAPTER XVI.

SLAVERY.

Purpose of the Colony.—Slave Rivers.—Numbers exported.—Antiquity of Slavery.—Inland Trade across Africa.—Mode of forfeiting Freedom.—Capture in War.—Crimes amongst Savages.—Simple Code.—Tyranny of Secret Institutions.—The Purrah.—Export Trade.—Its Stimulus to Oppression and Injustice.—Probable Case of Kidnapping in Freetown.—Facilities for stealing Free Boys.—Means of checking it.—*Suppression.*—Treaties in existence with Brazils—Netherlands—Spain—Portugal.—Cruel Operation of Treaties.—Letters of Protection to a Slaver from the British Authorities.—History of the Donna Maria da Gloria.—Treaty with France.

Upon Sierra Leone an honourable lustre will always shine. A spot, once the busiest station of the infamous traffic in slaves, it was selected for the assertion of

the principle of freedom in a country which has ever been the nursery of slavery. A few years since, Bance Island, in the river, a short distance above Freetown, was the chief mart on the coast of Africa for the sale of human beings. Its independent inhabitants still behold the walls of the factory, now abandoned; but, within the remembrance of many, crowded with victims.

The position of the colony is admirably chosen. Not only was a mighty blow struck at the custom of ages in its peculiar stronghold, where it was flourishing in extreme rifeness; where, too, its suppression would be most deeply and extensively felt; but the central situation of the Peninsula, even had the trade not existed there, between the most bustling slave-ports of Guinea on the one hand, and Senegambia on the other, would have rendered it favourable. The *export* trade in human beings, entirely originating in the whites, and maintained by them, is confined to the rivers. The Portuguese were the first

to visit this line of coast, and established slave-factories at the mouth of nearly every stream which would allow the entrance of a vessel. To the north of Sierra Leone, the number of these factories has diminished, owing to the frequency of British vessels passing to and from the Gambia, and the presence of British residents engaged in the African teak-trade. The petty chiefs claiming the banks of these rivers have found it more profitable, as well as more safe, to supply timber, than to continue their original speculations. Thus the Scarcies, Malacourie, and other rivers, cease to furnish slaves; the principal depôt for whom is the Rio Pongas. To the south of Sierra Leone, however, the scene changes. The Gulf of Guinea is studded with fleets of prison-ships, that steal into every river, and forcibly convey to the New World from the Old the population of kingdoms. The old and new Calabar, the Bonney, Whidat, and the Gallenas, contribute an inexhaustible supply for the French islands

of the West Indies, Rio Janeiro, Havannah, and the Brazils; where, notwithstanding every opposition and hindrance from the British cruisers, one hundred thousand* are supposed to arrive in safety annually, five times that number having been lost by capture or death. Death thins the cargoes in various modes; suicide destroys many, and many are thrown overboard at the close of the voyage; for, as a duty of ten dollars is set by the Brazilian Government upon each slave upon landing, such as seem unlikely to survive, or to bring a price sufficiently high to cover this custom-house tax, are purposely drowned before entering port. Those only escape these wholesale murders who will probably recover health and flesh when removed to the fattening pens of the slave-farmer, a man who contracts to feed up the skeletons to a marketable appearance.

The Kroos are the only people of the coast who abhor the otherwise universal practice of their country. With this ex-

* See Captain Owen's Narrative.

Pa Souba.

London, Published by Richard Bentley, 1836.

ception, the whole continent of Africa approves the system. Long before the white men came to create an *export* trade, an *internal* slave commerce was carried on in full vigour; and at this instant it prevails as extensively as ever. Whilst the English are endeavouring to check the sea-borne merchandise, the inland paths are crowded with multitudes destined to a distant sale; and should the name of slave-ship be forgotten, of which there is as yet no probability, matters would but return to their former state. The New World merely offered a new market; and though it should prove but a temporary one, Egypt, Nubia, Abyssinia, and Constantinople will continue steady in their consumption of an article prohibited by the Christian. As yet, however, this evil trade, like a religious sect, has but increased under persecution; and at no time has it torn away from country and home more men than since it has been pursued in defiance of Great Britain. The mode is altered, not the system destroyed. Attempts, how-

ever, at suppression, must not be permitted to slacken : if unsuccessful—and their success is problematical—they will prove strong disapprobation : not to oppose, would imply tacit sanction. Total destruction of this nefarious commerce will end only when a profitable market ceases to be open. Whilst the Brazils, the Havannah, and other portions of America, legalise the importation and purchase of Africans, and the profits rise in proportion to the risk, hardy captains and adventurous seamen* will always be found to work the quick slave-clippers, and brave the British squadron.

Every view of the sea or export trade exhibits the white man as the party deserving censure. He originated it; he promoted it; and he alone is author of whatever misery and death result.

* A seaman's wages on board a slaver are said to be thirty to forty dollars per month, if the vessel be brought safe to port with its live cargo; and *nothing* otherwise. Hence the perseverance, cunning, and even bravery of the pirate.

It may not be uninteresting to sketch the state of settled slavery in Africa itself, as it is found in undisturbed practice amongst the natives; where it is a part and parcel of the prescriptive law of the land, and where the adventitious horrors of the slave-ship do not penetrate even in imagination.

War furnishes prisoners; and as, in a negro battle, simultaneous movements of a body of troops are seldom made, the affair consists of a series of independent encounters between individuals more eager to capture than to kill. The vanquished become the property of the victor. They are not placed in rigorous confinement with fellow-prisoners for years, nor compelled to labour in public works; but enter into the easy service of one who has held power over their lives, and has spared them. If not sold, they become valuable to their owner, supplying his wants and swelling the number of his followers. Their health is more profitable than sickness; they receive favour

and escape cruelty. Some tribes, as the Timmanees, often give towns and a district to slaves, leaving them to their own internal regulations. The owner simply retains the title of head-man, and claims from the annual produce of the soil a kind of ground-rent in the shape of rice, palm-oil, and fowls. A man possessing several slave-towns becomes potent; and as Mamadoo, the Timmanee, informed me was his practice, the slaves are adopted into the tribe after a few years' residence. They, however, still recognise their old master as head-man. Hence numerous petty chiefs, and numerous attempts at independent power.

Such virtual liberation permits the full enjoyment of personal freedom, whilst it creates a feeling of interest between the head-man and his people. This practice is not universal, although not uncommon in those territories where the white slave-merchant's fascinations of rum and tobacco have not made men mere articles of barter. The youthful female slaves

become wives; the elder are either sent to the slave-towns before mentioned, or entrusted with domestic employment: the only domestic slaves whom I saw were young, and chiefly girls. No distinction was perceptible between the treatment and comfort of the bondsmen and the free. I have even mistaken a slave boy for one of the king's own children, from seeing them associate and play together on equal terms. The state of dependence is probably much similar to that of the patriarchal times, when, excepting in inheritance, household slaves were considered members of the family. That extreme degradation, mental and moral, which we are accustomed to attribute to slaves, is not there perceived. Civilisation is connected with a principle of separation; it arranges men into artificial classes; it raises a few, depresses some, crushes many. The slave of a simple pagan savage stands on much the same level as his master, excepting in physical relation; between the slave of the Christian man

of wealth and education and his owner—the interval is immeasurable.

In Turkey, all but the Sultan are slaves. Amongst the negro tribes, excepting perhaps the Foulahs, the gradations of rank, and power, and pomp are so limited, that the wants of the master are nearly as few as those of his servant, and his establishments often as simple. A wattled hut, rice, salt, palm-oil, and a few fowls, form the wealth of the lord; his slave cannot exist with less. Again, it is easy to understand that a sense of degradation cannot be strong where the change of relative situation is a chance common to all: for in a single day the freeman may lose his liberty, and his slave may be restored to freedom. Private despotism, then, of man over man does not practically exhibit so great atrocity amongst the African natives as might at first be believed. The *power* of injury, however, exists; which, although restrained by habit, is not removed by it. Indolence, and absence of motive to cruelty, are the

chief causes of comfort amongst these slaves; so that when any impulse, such as avarice encouraged by the white merchant, arises, kindness and mercy have no influence. In some of the more barbarous nations, particularly amongst the savages near the Bights, custom sanctions oppression. Prisoners are occasionally tortured to death, and retainers are murdered to throw solemnity over certain ceremonies; but the terrific sufferings of those who are condemned by an evil destiny to the factory and exportation, surpass the worst miseries of those who dwell peacefully with their sable masters in their own land.

The second source of slavery amongst the natives is *crime*, which, next to war, deprives the greatest number of liberty. Uncivilised life allows small scope for variety of social crime. Four offences only are capital; those against religion, including sorcery or witchcraft,* are of

* The evils to society arising from the practice of obeah are too well known by experience in the

daily occurrence; whilst the remainder, murder, adultery, and impertinence* or abusive language, are rare.

For each of these malpractices, slavery is the usual penalty. In the case of conjugal infidelity, the man alone is sold. The husband receives damages in the price of the offender, and further contents himself with the whipping and disgrace of his faithless spouse. Comparing the simplicity of the negro criminal code with the sanguinary enactments of European nations,—vassalage with death,—it is not easy to condemn their legislation. The usual bondage of a negro in his own country does not alter his mode of living otherwise than in placing him under surveillance, and in demanding a small por-

West Indies, to allow of surprise at the severe punishment awaiting it in Africa. The only wonder is, that dread of the wizard does not screen him from harm.

* Called "cursing" or "curse-palaver," sometimes "sauce-palaver." It is connected with witchcraft, as generally conveying some evil wish or denunciation.

tion of the produce of ground not his own; together with liability to sale and exchange of masters. Should he be sold to the Brazilian markets, it is his evil chance; and it must not be forgotten that none of the sufferings and misery from the moment of his quitting his native land is attributable to the black master who sold him, and who, seeing nothing fearful in the slavery to which he has been accustomed, is frequently ignorant of the lot which awaits the victim of the slave-ship.

Debt is occasionally the cause of bondage. Of the women who were packed in the close confinement of the Pantica slave schooner, I discovered several who owed their captivity to debt; and this not always of their own contracting, but incurred by their fathers or husbands. One quiet, inoffensive girl had been sold to the dealer to pay for rum which her parent had been enticed to purchase of the wily merchant, who was well aware that payment must be made in this manner.

Another had been consigned to the market in consequence of having broken a small earthenware basin belonging to the celebrated black Duke Ephraim, on the Calabar river, the price of which she was unable to raise. But such abuses of the rule of debtor and creditor are most frequent where the white merchant's demand is greatest; otherwise slavery* seldom liquidates debt.

The last customary source of native slavery is connected with religion and arcana, in a form utterly unknown to the three remaining continents of the world. Amongst various tribes around Sierra Leone there exist associations of the most remarkable character; in secrecy, exclu-

* For punishment of debtors, see chap. xx. In some places, any townsman of a runaway debtor may suffer a seizure of goods, and be thus made creditor. The king's property also may be thus detained on account of a subject, if the debt is due to one of a different tribe. In these cases, it is left to the townsman and the king to pursue their new debtor, and recover from him the value of their own loss. This I learnt at Royel, amongst the Timmanees.

sion of one sex, mysterious initiation, hidden modes of communication, cognizance of crime, and fearful retribution, resembling the supposed fundamentals of free-masonry, and the black tribunal of Germany in the middle ages. The Purrah of the Timmanees, Bulloms, and others, the Samo of the Soosoos, and the orgies of the Akoos, admit men only; whilst the Bundoo, perhaps the most singular secret institution in the world, consists entirely of women. The Purrah, or "law," is a solemn bond uniting in brotherhood and purpose individuals scattered through immense districts. Its definite object has not been clearly ascertained, or rather has not been promulgated. The rites are sealed to the uninitiated, and are only discovered to be in progress by the fearful howls and shrieks heard from the depths of the forest recesses at midnight, and by occasional flashing of torches; at which the profane intruder, though far off, is scared away — death following detection. Entire nations own the power

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] as the mere [illegible]. When [illegible] [illegible] of this dread [illegible] [illegible] a village, which is always [illegible] [illegible], every [illegible] hides himself, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] death or slavery. The [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], but differs in [illegible]. The [illegible] [illegible] of liberty [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] being [illegible] to its [illegible] privileges, [illegible] the laws, or [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] of the association, [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible]. This female [illegible] [illegible] especially devotes her [illegible] to the [illegible] of witchcraft.*

The East has, for ages, drawn large

* See Major Laing's Travels; also Winterbottom, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] not given [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] not to deve[illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] be [illegible]. With regard to the Bundu, I [illegible] [illegible] nothing of the [illegible], [illegible] in the heart of the district where it flourished. The secret association boasts of members, and even Bundu houses, in Sierra Leone; but dense mystery hangs over it. Amongst other facts which I discovered when amongst the Timmanees, [illegible] [illegible] a [illegible] at initiation. It corresponds with a practice mentioned by Niebuhr in a distant part of Africa.

supplies of slaves from Africa. The Turks prize the "Ethiopian," a name loosely employed to designate all blacks. Thousands traverse the woods and deserts of the interior for the markets of Egypt; and, although the miseries of their land journey are not comparable with the unutterable woes of those who cross the ocean, a small proportion only survives the perils and fatigues of the way. Paths lately passed by one of these armies of travelling captives may be traced by white heaps of bleached bones, which mark the spot where hundreds have lain down and died. Yet death in the open air of heaven, beneath the shadow of the palm-tree, or even upon the hot desert, wants the peculiar and lingering torments of the slave deck, in darkness and suffocation; where the cramped and distorted limbs have no means of relief for a moment by the slightest change of posture. The actual number carried into the interior for sale is unknown; it is supposed to exceed that of the exported.

Over this inland trade we have no control; not even a direct influence. Centuries will elapse before the great right of personal independence is admitted through the world. As yet, a part only of the Christian community respects it: with the Mahometan and devil-worshipper, to outrage it is an established principle.

Our chief concern lies with the export trade in human beings from Africa to that slave-state, America. To supply an annual demand of half a million, the captives in casual warfare, the criminals justly condemned, and even the offending members of the Purrah and the Bundoo are insufficient; and the first evil brought into existence by the export trade consists in the revolting methods which it introduces of increasing the number of slaves. Wars are promoted; strife between tribes, as well as between individuals, is sedulously fostered; seeds of hatred are industriously sown, that the white man may reap the harvest; laws are perverted; the judge is bribed to sa-

crifice the innocent, by the price given for the condemned; false accusations are rewarded by unjust sentences. Witchcraft, a crime more easily asserted than disproved, is found particularly to increase; and the inquisitors discover, in their favourite ordeal of boiling oil, or the poisonous red water,* a convenient assistant to wealth. The Samo and Purrah wield their formidable power for the same object; many a poor bundoo girl, accused in secret, suddenly disappears for ever from the sight of her friends; and a wholesome institution, which might be of much benefit, is made an engine of oppression. Nor is this all: kidnapping, the most artificial of crimes, becomes a mode of subsistence; social feeling melts before distrust; and a tribe where this practice is universal, as the Ibbos, may be regarded an aggregation of antagonisms.

It is a rule, with few exceptions, that the most cultivated of the black tribes

* In most respects analogous to the trial by the "waters of jealousy" of the ancient Hebrews.

are the greatest speculators in the sale of their countrymen. The negroes who people the West India Islands are for the most part representatives of the lowest families of the species in tropical Africa. The Mandingos and Foulahs, the literati of this region, are seldom sold; but themselves carry on most extensive dealings. Their emissaries are spread throughout the country, collecting, by means of subordinate agents, from many nations. Great in petty diplomacy, and in the influence of superior mind, they enjoy the benefit of dissensions of their own creating, and inveigle into their power by deep cunning. The Mandingos have discovered that Sierra Leone is an excellent field for this evil produce, offering a fair supply at little trouble or expense. That thousands have been stolen from the colony, after liberation, and resold into slavery, is not disputed.*

* A late charge to the grand jury from a chief justice of the colony has admitted the fact and dwelt upon it.

Opposite to Freetown, on the right bank of the river Sierra Leone, stands the chief town of the Bulloms, under the authority of the black chief and usurper Dalla Mohammedoo. This powerful man has been enriched by the slave-trade; his town is a depôt, and his politic enmity to the British secures his slave-mart from the inspection of the English. A canoe darts across the water in a short time; and, as in the recorded case of Banna, the man, woman, or child, lying at the bottom of the boat, gagged and screened from sight, may be carried over without suspicion.

An unpleasant circumstance happened in my own experience. Not long after my arrival at Sierra Leone, my sleep was one night broken by the sounds of a distant struggle. The windows, open for circulation of air, faced a plot of grassy ground, jutting upon the river, bounded by low copse and rock, excepting at one corner, where a rude path had been cut to a small landing-place for canoes. Supposing it

a mere midnight quarrel, I should have heeded it little, but that I heard smothered cries, evidently of a female; and the voices of several men, in threatening but subdued tones. When the party had arrived near the window, the symptoms of personal violence increased; and I arose in order to discover the nature of the disturbance. Utter darkness concealed the persons; but the sound of feet, of occasional blows, of low, harsh sentences, induced me to listen closely. I felt convinced that I could distinguish the dragging of an unwilling person over the dry grass, and could distinctly trace the receding party to the path leading down to the landing-place. The struggle for a few seconds seemed to be renewed. I heard a boat or canoe pushed into the water; then a splash of oars, and all was still. On mentioning the occurrence, in the morning, to a gentleman whose length of residence had made him better acquainted with native practices, I learnt with horror that it had probably been a case of kid-

napping; and that long before daylight the party had been safely deposited, with other slaves, on the Bullom shore, beyond the English jurisdiction.

A black inhabitant of Freetown, from whom I had been gleaning some information on sundry native customs, one day told me that he intended spending the following Sunday with friends on the Bullom shore. I remarked that I should like to see the place, and was half inclined to join the party. "If you will come," said the negro, "I shall be happy to take you. Dalla Mohammedoo will give me a good price for you." I mention this piece of negro jocularity as a proof of the general knowledge that the trade thrives upon the opposite bank of the river.

The plan adopted in Sierra Leone in the liberation of slaves facilitates the means of kidnapping. That portion of each captured cargo which consists of children under fourteen years of age, and which is distributed amongst the negro population of

the colony generally, is liable to a second exportation. As long as any negro whatever may buy a boy from the King's Yard on payment of ten shillings, and hold possession of him without at any time being called upon to account for the child, or even to produce him, so long will many be induced to transfer their young wards for five pounds each to the Mandingo merchant. The whites call the child so purchased from the King's Yard an apprentice; the blacks uniformly term it a *slave*. I cannot conceive a system better adapted to favour the slave-trade than that of apprenticeship at Sierra Leone: it is so regarded by the blacks on the spot; and was, without doubt, one of the grounds on which the plain-spoken Foulah rogue Ali founded his assertion that, of all spots in Africa, Freetown was most favourable to the slave-dealer. It is melancholy to feel the truth of this; and the more so, as effectual checks at once suggest themselves. Instead of allowing every village and every house to contain boys and girls nominally

free, but really under the wanton despotism of Liberated slaves their masters—(with a legal appeal from personal cruelty, it is true, to the Chief Justice, of which the children must in general be entirely ignorant, but without protection from transference from master to master, until they fall into the eager hands of the slave-dealer)—instead of trusting to the honesty of the pagan purchaser, whose customs sanction the sale of his fellows, the security of the youthful captives should be guarded by authority, and each owner should from time to time be required to produce his charge. The Government should appoint a superintendent of apprentices: such an officer is indispensably necessary.

The next step to be taken, in order to suppress kidnapping in the English colony, has been suggested by the Colonial Secretary, than whom no man perhaps in the Peninsula is better qualified, from official experience and long residence, to offer an opinion,—the establishment of a river po-

lice. It is across the river that every victim is carried to the Bullom shore; yet no force whatever is appointed to watch the passage, and no one is authorised to inspect suspicious canoes. A *floating police* should lie upon the waters in front of the town, *ready to examine every boat or canoe leaving the creeks of the colony.*

The brief outline of the present working of the slave system in Africa introduces the subject more immediately connected with Sierra Leone: the present means used for its

Suppression.

England, at one period, and that not a remote one, employed the greatest number of vessels, and embarked the largest capital, in this inhuman commerce. The same improved tone of moral feeling which made such speculations illegal for the British subject, induced the English Government to obtain treaties from other nations, prohibiting the trade under their respective flags.

These treaties are more or less effective, according to the coincidence or difference of views taken by the high contracting parties; that with the Brazils made it piracy after the year 1826, and that with the Dutch after 1829. These æras having arrived, slave-ships have ceased to sail under the colours of these nations.

The treaties with Spain and Portugal are of a different character; they show the reluctance with which these powers co-operate to check a profitable trade; they abound in incongruities, acknowledging the principle of abolition, and allowing English cruisers to detain slave-vessels within certain latitudes, but in all others protecting the commerce, and forbidding interference. It fell to my lot to witness the cruel operation of these treaties.

On the morning after my arrival at Sierra Leone, I was indulging in the first view of the waters of the estuary glittering in the hot sun, and endeavouring to distinguish from the many vessels at an-

chor the barque which had brought me from England.

Close in shore lay a large schooner, so remarkable from the low, sharp cut of her black hull, and the excessive rake of her masts, that she seemed amongst the other craft as a swallow seems amongst birds. Her deck was crowded with naked blacks, whose woolly heads studded the rail. She was a slaver, with a large cargo. In the autumn of 1833, this schooner, apparently a Brazilian, and named with the liberty-stirring appellation of "Donna Maria da Gloria," had left Loando, on the slave-coast, with a few bales of merchandise, to comply with the formalities required by the authorities from vessels engaged in legal traffic; for the slave-trade, under the Brazilian flag, is now piracy. No sooner was she out of port than the real object of her voyage declared itself. She hastily received on board four hundred and thirty negroes, who had been mustered in readiness, and sailed for Rio Janeiro.

Off the mouth of that harbour she arrived in November, and was captured as a slaver by H. M. brig Snake. The case was brought in December before the court established there; and the court decided that, as her Brazilian character had not been fully made out, it was incompetent to the final decision of the case. It was necessary to apply to the Court of Mixed Commission at Sierra Leone for the purpose of adjudication. A second time, therefore, the unfortunate dungeon-ship put to sea with her luckless cargo, and again crossed the Atlantic amidst the horrors of a two months' voyage. The Donna Maria da Gloria, having returned to Africa, cast anchor at Freetown in the middle of February 1834, and on arrival found the number reduced by death from four hundred and thirty to three hundred and thirty-five.

Continuance of misery for several months in a cramped posture, in a pestilential atmosphere, had not only destroyed many, but had spread disease

amongst the survivors. Dropsy, eruptions, abcesses, and dysentery were making ravages, and ophthalmia was general. Until formally adjudicated by the court, the wretched slaves could not be landed, nor even relieved from their sickening situation. With the green hills and valleys of the colony close to them, they must not leave their prison. I saw them in April; they had been in the harbour two months, and no release had been offered them. But the most painful circumstance was the final decision of the court. The slaver was proved to have been sailing under *Portuguese* colours, not Brazilian; and the treaty with the Portuguese prohibits slave-traffic to the *north* of a certain line only, whereas the Donna Maria had been captured a few degrees to the *south*. No alternative remained. Her capture was decided to have been illegal. She was formally delivered up to her slave-captain; and he received from the British authorities written orders to the commanders of the British cruisers, gua-

ranteeing her a safe and free passage back to the Brazils: and I saw the evil ship weigh anchor and leave Sierra Leone, the seat of slave liberation, with her large canvass proudly swelling, and her ensign floating as if in contempt and triumph. Thus a third time were the dying wretches carried across the Atlantic after seven months' confinement; few probably lived through the passage. At the moment when the schooner bent her course to the ocean, the slaves on board rent the air with three loud cheers! Perhaps the monotony of misery had become insupportable; any variety, even the prospect of the Brazilian market, or of a grave in the waters, might excite them.

A fifth power, France, has been content to hold a nominal treaty with Great Britain. Had the object been promotion instead of suppression, it would have proved equally efficacious.

Under the plea that a French squadron is floating on the coast, and that the settlement at Goree is a substitute for

Sierra Leone, the British cruisers are interdicted from detaining, searching, or even boarding a slave-ship under the tri-colour flag, although her character and her merchandise are known.* Not only, therefore, do subjects of that liberty-loving power cover the seas with slave-ships under protection of the tri-colour; but the Portuguese and Spaniards, Brazilian and Dutch, find it a good passport.†

Such‡ being the degrees of assent to suppression amongst the six maritime nations of Europe, a court exists at Sierra Leone to guard the fulfilment of the several treaties. It consists of commissioners or their proxies from the several contracting powers. The court is named from its constitution the "Mixed Commission Court."

* See Leonard's Voyage.

† Conventions exist with Sardinia, Sweden, and Denmark.

‡ In the present year, 1835, attention has been drawn to this subject by Mr. Buxton.—See *Parliamentary Report.*

England pays two commissioners, who are authorised to act for Spain and the Netherlands. Brazilian and Portuguese consuls, members of the court, reside at Freetown. The hollow treaty with France renders the presence of a commissioner from that Power unnecessary.

CHAPTER XVII.

SLAVE LIBERATION.

Process of *Liberation*. — Cruisers. — Capture. — Fear of being eaten by the English.—Horrors of the middle Passage.—Mixed Commission Court. —The King's Yard.—Disposal of "Captives."— Cruelty to Apprentices.—Military Glory.—Distribution of the Liberated.—Better Policy of Liberia.—A captured Slave-schooner.—Description of La Pantica, and the History of her Human Cargo.—Inhumanity to the Dying.—Apathy.— Emotions of Gratitude towards "Bottle of Beer." — Poetry and Love. — Calabar and his little Fayeënawon.—The Squadron.—Remains of the Black Joke.

THE process of liberation is interesting. Its details are the following:—When a cruiser falls in with a slave-ship, which generally occurs off the mouth of some river in the Bight of Benin, or of Biafra, the Calabar, Bonny, or Gallenas, a search

is made; and if the equipments and cargo permit detention, according to the articles of the treaties, an officer and a prize-crew are put on board from the captor, who take possession of the craft, and navigate her with her slaves to Sierra Leone for adjudication. The first intimation of liberty consists in striking off the fetters with which the slaves are always fastened by the ankles in couples. The slave-captain, and one or two of his seamen, are conveyed to Freetown as witnesses, and also to receive charge of the vessel in case of her being liberated by the court, as in the instance of the Donna Maria. Freedom from chains is the utmost extent of liberty which can yet be granted to the slaves; for as such they are considered until judicial sentence has been pronounced. It is during the interval between detention and arrival that the appalling misery of these men is aggravated by a long working to windward, by intense heat, and the overcrowded state of the slave decks; where the space allowed

to the tallest men is generally from twenty-three inches to two feet and a half in height. The slaves, who have suffered comparatively little during the short time that they have been in possession of the slave-captain, finding their wretchedness daily increasing, are apt to attribute it to their new possessors, the English, and to lament the fate which has deprived them of their captive master; they are not aware that he is the real author of their calamities, and that the English are their liberators. A strong impression exists amongst them that they will be eaten by the British,—a belief carefully instilled by the Spanish and Portuguese; and one which has caused many a negro to throw himself into the sea, that he might escape being devoured.

As soon as a prize-slaver is perceived from Freetown standing in for the river, a gun is fired from the signal-hills announcing its approach. The rakish craft is easily recognised; the authorities pre-

pare for the formalities, the white residents speculate as to the fortunate cruiser and captain to whom the prize belongs, the haughty black Settlers sneer at the new importation of savage Captives, and the Mandingos delight at the prospect of a fresh supply of cheap apprentices.

The machinery of the Mixed Commission Court is worked by the commissioners, with the assistance of proctors, a registrar, a marshal, and clerks.

Upon the slaver dropping anchor before the town, the marshal and colonial surgeon proceed to board her: her name, flag, and other particulars, are noted; together with the number of slaves on capture, and the number of subsequent deaths.

The survivors are then distinguished into men and boys, women and girls; the mode of classification from personal inspection is better suited to those latitudes than to the temperate zones. The information is forwarded to the registrar.

The captors, through their proctor, lay

claim to the prize before the court. Affidavits of the prize-master, the ship's papers, and the captain's declaration, are presented. The marshal then affixes against the wall of the public wharf a monition from the court, citing all parties interested to appear. Evidence on both sides is heard; and, according to the treaty with the power under whose flag the vessel was captured, she is released or condemned. On condemnation, the slaves are adopted as British free subjects, are landed, and conveyed, in the first instance, to the King's Yard, a large species of prison, consisting of a central house, within a square yard, surrounded by open sheds; the whole encompassed by high walls, and secured by well-guarded gates. The ship itself is forthwith sold by public auction, for the benefit of the captors.*

* As there are few bidders, and money is scarce in the colony, a schooner in good condition, well found in spars, canvass, and rigging, is often knocked down at less than 200*l.*—a sum more than repaid by the first freight to England. The schooner La Pantica was sold, I think, for about 130*l.*

The captives remain in the King's Yard, in rather equivocal freedom, until formally disposed of: each, when landed, is furnished with a slight, partial covering. The men, boys, and girls receive about a yard and a quarter of coarse white cotton wrapper; the women put on a check garb, simply sewed at the sides, with holes for the arms, and extending from the neck to the knees. After a few days, the whole are freed, to make room for successors.

In this wise freedom visits the captives. The men are inspected by a sergeant and officer when conscripts are wanted. The most muscular are drafted at once into the King's service; and are marched in a string, *nolentes volentes*, under strong escort, to the barracks, to learn regimental discipline.

The women are submitted for choice to such negroes as express desire for conjugal happiness; and are carried off to joy by liege lords, who assume their unasked consent, under the sanction of the Gover-

nor. Short is the courtship; for the languages of the pair are generally unintelligible to each other. Few are the throbs of anxiety, and light the labours of wooing, where the ladies' will is not consulted. In the negro vocabulary of love, "wife" signifies servant and labourer, tiller of the ground, grinder of corn, water-bearer. The captive women are eagerly pounced upon as wives.

The children under fourteen* now remain to be emancipated from the horrors of slavery. Any resident in the colony, of any colour, may enter the King's Yard, select a girl or a boy, and thereupon tie a string or piece of tape round the neck as a mark of appropriation. He then pays ten shillings; and the passive child becomes his property, under the name of apprentice, for three years. So little discrimination is exercised with respect to the purchaser, that *domestic* servants are

* Women marry a year or more under this age, which is a European, and not an African criterion of maturity.

in the habit of buying them, and of employing them in the heavier drudgery of house-work. The little slaves call their servant-masters "daady;" and probably derive advantage from the superintending eye of the white master of *their* master. I do not certainly consider active cruelty of disposition to be an attribute of the negro; apathy, decidedly, is one. The same sluggishness of feeling which enables him to endure the worst misery of the slave-ship without a murmur, and to remain quietly lingering for death as a matter of course; which, too, closes his eyes to the scenes of disease and mortality around, whilst he is joining in the song and sprightly dance on the loathsome deck of the slave-ship; the same sluggishness of feeling prevents all moderation or pity, should he be excited by passion to inflict pain.

I have seen each of these results from the same constitutional source; the last in the cases of apprentices, when masters or mistresses—daadies and maamies, as they are called—had outraged humanity

by prolonged tortures, instead of necessary punishment for error or disobedience. It is unfortunate that children should be exposed to the caprice of such purchasers as feel no interest in them beyond the profit of their labours, or the price of their persons, if an opportunity occurs of selling them. After the wives and soldiers have departed from the King's Yard, many, chiefly men, are left to be finally located. But, before detailing the plan in operation for settling the emancipated, it may be worth while to notice the opinion prevalent amongst the free black population with regard to the liberation of those who are suddenly metamorphosed into soldiers. It is always important to understand general feelings in a community.

The personal restraint alone of military discipline might not be oppressive to the indolent negro: but his comfort is grievously impeded by the heating uniform of scarlet cloth, the weighty shako, the tight stiff stock, and cumbrous shoes: not to mention the weight of musket and side-

arms. To one who, up to the hour of being so clothed, has swayed his limbs in perfect freedom from dress, these are no light matters. The fatigues of drill, of parade, and practice, are foreign to his habits; they are more opposed to his education and taste than the labours of a plantation.

Europeans feel pride in military pomp; not so the negro. The 28th of May 1834 beheld the black garrison of Sierra Leone, together with the black militia, drawn out in honour of his Majesty's birth-day, upon the sward near Fort Falconbridge, glittering in the sun in all "the pomp and circumstance of war," alarming the peaceful leopards and baboons of the vicinity with *feux de joie*, and awing the town's-people who had congregated to witness the show. I naturally considered the spectacle to be a striking one to the blacks, and expected a sensation to have been produced by the contrast of bright uniforms and flashing trappings with the slovenly herd of civilian natives. Not being present myself, hav-

ing done honour to his Majesty on the hospitable quarter-deck of a man-of-war in the estuary, I afterwards took occasion to converse with an intelligent young Soosoo, and inquired whether he had no desire to become a soldier. "No, never," was his reply. Knowing him to be much attached to the English, I put the question whether he would refuse to fight if the Timmanees were to make another attack upon the town. "Yes, he would fight for the white men," he said; "but would not be a slave." I asked him what he meant by slave; the word had not been mentioned. "Soldiers," he answered, "are slaves; loaded with heavy arms and dress, shut up in the barracks as if it were the gaol, forced to march and labour against their will when the white men pleased;" and, finally, to clench his argument, he exclaimed, "they make soldiers of Captives;" that is, of the Liberated slaves. Nothing could modify his opinion, and the opinion of the Soosoo was the prevalent one. It will be fortunate if the troops

prove worthy of confidence in the hour of danger, should the colony be again invaded by warlike savages.

The arbitrary consignment of women to matrimonial discipline might have been an experiment; the practice was mentioned as of recent adoption. Their lot is not, perhaps, an unhappy one to themselves; it seems to violate no custom, it secures the usual comforts of married life where marriage is never the result of sentiment, and a disposal of them in every respect consistent with philanthropy and their own tastes might be difficult to devise. A judicious selection from the husband-candidates, and licence for wife-appropriation granted to none but deserving and known men, would lessen the evils of the connubial lottery; and one party at least, the wives, would be certain of gaining prizes. On the whole, this method is not without its merits,—in Africa alone, of course; at present, its introduction would scarcely be popular in England.

A similar restriction extended to appli-

cants for apprentices, together with a superintendence extending over the period of their servitude, would obviate every objection to the method of providing for the captive children. Schools, more useful in forming habits of steadiness and regularity than in conveying literary knowledge, are found in the majority of the villages, which all Liberated under the age of fourteen are expected to attend. The girls generally marry from choice from the age of thirteen to fifteen; and the "King's boys," as they are termed, when thrown on their own resources, are directed to the means of procuring subsistence.

When recruits, wives, and apprentices have been drafted from the King's Yard, some of the slaves still remain awaiting the boon of liberty. These are chiefly men; and, as each slave-ship pours many hundreds at a time into the yard, many are left for ultimate disposal.

Their distribution through the colony is determined according to the plans in

progress for peopling the particular districts of the Peninsula. The Manager of a certain district is informed that a certain number will be consigned to his management, and he selects spots within his province for their location. Each Liberated receives an outfit of a piece of cotton; and Government allows him an iron pot for boiling rice, a spoon, and a few additional domestic implements of similar simplicity and usefulness. He rears a hut, with assistance from his neighbours; it is a square shed, supported on a frame-work resting on eight or ten poles, interlaid with dry grass, plastered with mud, and is thatched with dry boughs. Its construction occupies from a few days to a month. Nails and hinges are supplied him, and his wealth is further increased by a cutlass and a hoe. Round his rude dwelling the newly naturalised British subject obtains a grant of land, limited to about half a rood. Being now established, and having started into civilised life under the same auspices and ad-

vantages as others enjoyed before him, he is henceforth left to his own management. The habit of system, the sense of security, the advantages of barter in a regular market, by degrees wear off the rough edges of savage character; and many a man so adopted into the English colony lives to appreciate his altered situation, to value improvement, to advance in intellectual and moral grade, to become a useful unit in the social aggregate.

In comparing the British with the American policy, in the location and treatment of Liberated in the two colonies of Sierra Leone and Liberia, the advantage in some respects would seem to lie with the latter. The emancipated black in our own settlement receives half a rood of ground, and no more can he obtain. This suffices for personal subsistence, but precludes extensive agriculture. The face of the Peninsula is speckled with innumerable half-roods of cassada, yam, and plantain in endless repetition. Farms are discountenanced by this system; the

more valuable produce of the soil cannot be reared; and, further than this, the few days of labour required to cultivate so small a garden leaves the remainder of the year an indolent holiday. As yet the wild unclaimed bush, or forest, presses upon the black colonists; and when industry and taste for agriculture develope themselves, free use is made of the unappropriated land; by this means the rich soil of the valleys is often cleared of its forest wood, and industrious hands plant useful roots and raise fruit-trees. This is, however, permitted, and not encouraged. Ground so appropriated and cultivated may be taken from the useful trespasser, and allotted in grants upon the first fresh importation of Captives sent to be located in the district.

The patrons of Liberia act otherwise; they are perhaps enabled to do so from the much greater extent of territory at their command. With the intention of providing, not only for the immediate wants of the negro colonist, but also for

the permanent and progressing prosperity of the settlement, each settler has assigned to him a grant of fifty acres of land, with the privilege of claiming an addition of the same extent on payment of twenty-five cents per acre, after five years of residence and steady labour. This stimulus to exertion and enterprise operates favourably. But the free blacks of Liberia have a still greater inducement to the pursuit of agriculture, such indeed as must ultimately render the colony valuable to the mother-country and rich in itself. A donation of five hundred acres is given to any black, or association of blacks, upon the simple condition that it shall be devoted to the cultivation of coffee, sugar, and cotton.

To return, however, to the process of liberation at Sierra Leone. I had an opportunity of observing its details as an eye-witness. One fine day in May the signal-gun told of the approach of a vessel, which the lookers-out on the signal-hill announced, by the usual mode of

hoisting a coloured ball to the top of a staff, to be a schooner or brig from the south. A sharp-built schooner with crowded canvass glanced up the estuary like lightning. Her nature was obvious. She was a prize. A painful interest prompted me to visit as speedily as possible this prison-ship. A friend offered the advantage of his company to a scene which has sometimes so completely overwhelmed a novice as to render the support of a friend advantageous. The Timmanee crew of the official boat swiftly shot us along-side. The craft showed Spanish colours, and was named "La Pantica." We easily leaped on board, as she lay low in the water. The first hasty glance around caused a sudden sickness and faintness, followed by an indignation more intense than discreet. Before us, lying in a heap, huddled together at the foot of the foremast, on the bare and filthy deck, lay several human beings in the last stage of emaciation—dying. The ship fore and aft was thronged with men, wo-

men, and children, all entirely naked, and disgusting with disease. The stench was nearly insupportable, cleanliness being impossible. I stepped to the hatchway; it was secured by iron bars and cross bars, and pressed against them were the heads of slaves below. It appeared that the crowd on deck formed one-third only of the cargo, two-thirds being stowed in a sitting posture below between-decks; the men forward, the women aft. Two hundred and seventy-four were at this moment in the little schooner. When captured, three hundred and fifteen had been found on board; forty had died during the voyage from the Old Calabar, where she had been captured by H. M. Fair Rosamond, and one had drowned himself on arrival, probably in fear of being "yammed" by the English. It was not, however, until the second visit, on the following day, that the misery which reigns in a slave-ship was fully understood.

The rainy season had commenced, and during the night rain had poured heavily

down. Nearly a hundred slaves had been exposed to the weather on deck, and amongst them the heap of dying skeletons at the fore-mast. After making my way through the clustered mass of women on the quarter-deck, I discovered the slave-captain, who had also been part-owner, comfortably asleep in his cot, undisturbed by the horrors around him. The captives were now counted; their numbers, sex, and age written down, for the information of the Court of Mixed Commission. The task was repulsive. As the hold had been divided for the separation of the men and the women, those on deck were first counted; they were then driven forward, crowded as much as possible, and the women were drawn up through the small hatchway from their hot, dark confinement. A black boatswain seized them one by one, dragging them before us for a moment, when the proper officer in a glance decided the age, whether above or under fourteen; and they were instantly swung again by the arm into their loathsome cell, where

another negro boatswain sat, with a whip or stick, and forced them to resume the bent and painful attitude necessary for the stowage of so large a number. The unfortunate women and girls, in general, submitted with quiet resignation when absence of disease and the use of their limbs permitted. A month had made their condition familiar to them. One or two were less philosophical, or suffered more acutely than the rest. Their shrieks rose faintly from their hidden prison, as violent compulsion alone squeezed them into their nook against the curve of the ship's side. I attempted to descend, in order to see the accommodation. The height between the floor and ceiling was about twenty-two inches. The agony of the position of the crouching slaves may be imagined, especially that of the men, whose heads and necks are bent down by the boarding above them. Once so fixed, relief by motion or change of posture is unattainable. The body frequently stiffens into a permanent curve; and in the streets of Freetown

I have seen liberated slaves in every conceivable state of distortion. One I remember, who trailed along his body, with his back to the ground, by means of his hands and ankles. Many can never resume the upright posture.

La Pantica was condemned. The "slaves," so designated in the official order of the acting registrar, *after their emancipation*, were brought ashore. Their comfort was as yet little consulted; fifty were conveyed in each canoe; one expired during the transit, and another, a few minutes after landing, died before my eyes. The apathy of the negro here displayed itself. Shuddering at the sight of the gasping man, whose fixed and glazing eye, emaciated body, and rattle in the throat, indicated coming dissolution, I requested a constable of the King's Yard, who stood by, to raise the dying slave from the mud and pool of water into which he had been carelessly laid down, and desired him to spread a mat for him on the dry ground under the shed. The request was not

heeded. The constable walked away, simply remarking, "He no good; he go for die."

The men and children were first brought into the Liberated Yard; and, being ranged in a line, a piece of cotton was given each. Several had no idea of the purpose for which it was intended. Few of the children seemed to approve of the new uncomfortable fashion. Decency had suggested the distribution of the scanty checked chemises to the women, previous to their landing. When clothed, and again counted, the whole were marched across the street, from the Liberated Yard to the King's Yard, to await their final distribution as soldiers, wives, apprentices, and country gentlemen.

To the King's Yard I paid frequent visits, and found an interest awakened in behalf of the people. The young children soon recovered from their sufferings, and their elastic spirits seemed little injured. The men next rallied; but several died in the shed devoted to the most sickly, chiefly

from dysentery: they were wrapped in a coarse grass mat, carried away, and buried without ceremony. Of the women many were despatched to the hospital at Kissey, victims to raging fever; others had become insane. I was informed that insanity is the frequent fate of the women captives, and that it chiefly comes upon such as at first exhibit most intellectual developement, and greatest liveliness of disposition. Instances were pointed out to me. The women sustain their bodily sufferings with more silent fortitude than the men, and seldom destroy themselves; but they brood more over their misfortunes, until the sense of them is lost in madness. Two gigantic fellows, whose sharp awl-shaped teeth made the friendliness of their smile suspicious, were shown me as cannibals. The interpreter asked them if this was true; they laughed, and assented.

The slaves had been principally brought from the Old Calabar river, but consisted of contributions from many nations. None understood English; and the

interpreter, Ogoo, an Ibbo by birth, now a useful officer in the Liberated Yard, who spoke several languages, found those of the majority unintelligible to himself; I had therefore small means of ascertaining the general impressions of the Liberated. No joy at the fact of liberation was perceptible. In more cases than one, a strong desire of return to the ship was expressed; they certainly did not attribute their recent woes to the Spanish captain. Indifference, both with regard to the past and the future, seems general; the Foulahs are fatalists, and probably their pagan countrymen submit to circumstances on the same principle. They are not, however, destitute of feeling. On one occasion, it was displayed in an interesting manner. A visit of some of the English prize-officers to the yard had evidently given pleasure to several of their late charge. It happened, however, that when the ship-stock of yams and pepper were brought to the King's Yard, one of the black boatswains, a most ugly Kroo, named Bottle of Beer, who had

superintended the slaves in their voyage, accompanied the sailors who brought the food. No sooner was the good-humoured, merry face of the hideous Bottle of Beer perceived, than a general rush took place from all quarters of the yard. All gathered round, laughing and shouting his name. The women and children pressed upon him; at least a dozen seized him at once by the hands, arms, and knees; a little girl climbed up his back to kiss him; the women tenderly wiped the perspiration from his face, and the throng threatened to suffocate him with fondness. Even the invalids, hearing the name of their friend, rose from the mats, and tottered from their sheds to greet him. He had been kind to them when kindness had little power to lessen their misery. Such gratitude, in such a place, was touching.

Their hours were spent idly; preparation of food was their sole occupation. The young children alone showed active ingenuity. This they did in two ways: they had at first submitted to the innovation of

the cotton wrapper, but, before a day had elapsed, I found many freed from the incumbrance, carrying instead of it little wallets suspended round their necks and formed of the calico. The young creatures had torn it into small squares; by twisting the unravelled fibres had made thread; and by means of a sharp stone, or pointed stick picked from the ground, had sewn the edges together firmly and neatly. One bag, so made by a child of six or seven years, had two compartments, cleverly divided by the insertion of another square of calico. In place of ribbon, they had drawn out the long grass from their matting, and plaited it.

Their other employment was laughable, even to themselves. The propensity of the African to gash and tattoo the face has been mentioned. Here a substitute for the knife and burnt stick presented itself in the mortar of the walls and shed. With a lump of this material moistened in water, an elder girl continued through a morning chalking into grotesque patterns

the jetty face of a grinning little maid, who sat on the ground, enduring the operation with much glee. Circles and vandykes, perpendicular and horizontal lines of half an inch in breadth, white upon a black ground, precisely like the markings of a zebra, put nearly all the children into masquerade. The sight of these variegated creatures in their evening dance would have forced smiles from an anchorite.

At my last visit, the children wore circular tin plates, stamped and numbered, tied round their necks. They had been allotted as apprentices to different applicants. Their mirth was to end; the bond of fellowship, bound in days of misery, was to be loosened; the "ship-friends" were to be separated. The badge of appropriation looked ill; it savoured of slavery. The Settler, who first explained to me the purport, said the tin plates were to show to what master each "slave" belonged.

The last place in which romance and

poetry would be sought is the King's Yard at Sierra Leone; yet there they certainly did throw their soft inspiration over a boy and a girl, each in the poetic period of negro life. Calabar appeared to be sixteen years of age: he had an intelligent countenance, a fine expression. He alone had learnt some English on board the slaver; owing perhaps to more frequent intercourse with the officers, which resulted from his superior bearing and excellent conduct. He had been slave to the notorious Duke Ephraim; but detesting restraint, and sighing for independence, he had used an Irish mode of obtaining it, by escaping from the negro duke, and delivering himself up to the Spanish captain, at that time taking in his complement of slaves for the Brazilian market. He had made himself useful on board, and was useful in the yard also, maintaining an ascendency over all the boys, and marshalling them at order.

Amongst the young girls, one had early attracted my interest by a singular

aidenly grace and dignity: her person as exquisitely moulded; her counte- nance beaming, but gentle. I had re- mmended an English lady to apply for e beautiful Fayënawon, in order that e might educate her as a substitute for e terrific object who officiated as lady's aid; and, as a mark of this possible ap- opriation, I had tied a bright red hand- rchief round the child's head. Igno- nt of my intention, Fayënawon had in- cently considered it as a mere orna- ent, and proof of kindness; and ever terwards, on my entering the yard, uld leave the throng of her compa- ons, and even her plantain and rice, to eet me. It needed little observation to scover that an attachment had grown tween Calabar and Fayënawon. They ere constantly walking together, with r arm resting on his shoulder; and he oved a very knight of the old school of ivalry, daring dangers to gratify his tle lady. Negroes are much terrified a horse: none of these slaves had be-

fore seen one. Horror-stricken when I first rode into the yard, one and all had rushed for safety into the shed on my advance, and Calabar as nimbly as the rest. Fayënawon alone lingered at the entrance of her shed, without courage to meet the monster, yet desirous of presenting herself before me. I called her; she came forward a step, then hastily retreated: Calabar ran to the child, and, taking her hand, cautiously led her towards me. On dismounting, I told the boy to hold the horse; after a pause, he did so, to the high gratification of little Fayënawon. Being desirous to discover how far the young savage could conquer his terror, I ordered him to mount; he looked long at Fayënawon; but at last, placing his foot in the stirrup, leaped into the saddle, to the astonishment of the slaves: he turned his eye proudly towards his favourite, and soon rejoined her. On the distribution of apprentices, Calabar and his Fayënawon were of course separated. The timid girl is now

probably engaged in the severe labour of some hard negro task-mistress, and liable to the frequent castigations of the thorn-stick. The lot of Calabar depends on his age: if classed amongst the boys, he too is an apprentice in some part of the colony; if amongst the men, he is either employed in the barracks, or on public works, or farming his half-rood of ground. It is within the scope of possibility that both of them have been carried off, again battened down between the decks of the slave-ship, and are again on their way to the slave-markets of Rio Janeiro or Havannah.

Thirteen British men-of-war watch the coast, cruising for slavers. The head-quarters and residence of the admiral are at the Cape of Good Hope; scarcely the most favourable spot, if the exclusive use of the squadron be for the suppression of the slave-trade. The rivers of Guinea, frequented by the slave-ships, are too remote from the Cape to permit rapid and constant exchange of intelligence; and

the slave-trade is, by treaty, LEGAL to the south of the line. The vessels employed for its suppression are small frigates and gun-brigs, commissioned for three years' service. The ship which captures a prize receives the price it brings by auction; and prize-money is, moreover, awarded according to the number of slaves released.

The chances of capture and of consequent prize-money, the excitements of search, of chase, of occasional exchange of shots, combine to soften down the afflictions of the climate. The excellent band of meritorious and energetic officers and men at present employed on the station, do as much as can possibly be done to check the traffic. Experience, however, proves the system to be totally inadequate. But a small proportion of slave-ships are captured; by far the greater number elude detection, and arrive safely at their destination. Captures are, with few exceptions, the result of mere accident. The low, sharp, rakish schooner of

the pirates can sometimes walk round the dignified square ships of the service, and in light winds invariably distance them: if they are taken after a long chase, it is in consequence of the better skill of the British sailing-master. Thus the Pantica was captured by a happy chance; the Fair Rosamond had entered the Calabar river, and dropped anchor in a dark, foggy night: when morning broke, the slave-ship was discovered close by; they had unconsciously lain as neighbours side by side. The Pantica had been loaded with slaves, and was ready to weigh anchor at sunrise for America. A rocket was fired over her, and she had no alternative but to strike her colours.

Some years since, we find a plan adopted of arming these captured schooners, and employing them as cruisers. The result was one of singular success. The far-famed Black Joke was of this description. She had been a slave-ship of the finest model, captured by Sir F. Collier, in the Sibylle; and, armed with a

long arrival, she became the terror of the slave-merchants throughout the coast. Her speed was unequalled by anything that ever made trial against her. In a year she alone captured nearly as many slave-ships as the whole squadron. Her fame does not rest simply upon her speed: as long as gallantry of the highest order is esteemed, her deeds and encounters will be remembered.* The ultimate benefit to be derived from such employment of armed slavers cannot be known, the Admiralty having decided against their further use.

The Black Joke was finally condemned and burnt; and a melancholy sight have I considered it when passing by her long-eighteen, that still stands above water in the bay at half-tide. It recalled the stories of her heroic doings, which had often excited me in distant England, long before I dreamed that it would ever be

* For a full account of the dauntless achievements of the Black Joke, see "United Service Journal."

my lot to glide by the remains of that gallant bark.

So efficient were her services, that many a negro who had been liberated by her is said to have wept on beholding the conflagration; and it is notorious that, from the Rio Pongas to the Gallenas, feasts and rejoicings amongst the slave-merchants bore witness to the feelings with which they regarded the destruction of their scourge.*

* For a list of the slave-ships, their nation, and number of slaves, captured from the year 1827 to June 1834, see Appendix.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HEALTH AND CLIMATE.

Insouciance of White Residents.—Policy of representing Sierra Leone to be unhealthy.—Inquiries.—Relation of the Peninsula to the surrounding Country.—Peculiar character of the Peninsula itself.—Its Climate and Meteorology.—Causes, particular and general, of its ill repute.—Causes operating to divest it of such reputation.—Actual State of Health.

In England the very name of Sierra Leone is synonymous with pestilence and death; it is known as the White Man's Grave—the Sepulchre of Europeans. Melancholy are the reflections forced on the stranger who beholds as perfect a scene of the lovely, the bright, and the tranquil as any spot on earth can offer; yet feels that where all else is glowing with generous fertility and productiveness, man, and

man only, is doomed to certain and speedy decay.

A slight intercourse only with the European residents is needed to modify his forebodings. Little apprehension of death is indicated by the countenances of the community. Active horsemen, bustling merchants, gay officials move on all sides, with a cheerfulness little consistent with enduring dread of the King of Terrors. The church, he thinks, must surely be filled with a population hourly looking for dissolution. He visits it; it is nearly empty. There are a few black soldiers, a few black servants, and a goodly show of Sunday-school children, but scarcely any of the ill-fated whites preparing themselves for their inevitable interment:—where are they? They are enjoying the easy hours, released from the cares of the week; riding to the race-course, sailing on the bright estuary to Pirates' or Cockle Bay, or chatting at home. He casts his eye on the walls of the church, to decypher the tablets which must doubtless

abound to the memory of those victims who are stated to be innumerable. Two marbles only he perceives, one on either side of the aisle; he reads the records on them, which state them both to have been erected to *one* and the *same* individual; and even this individual not a white martyr to the climate, but a young man of colour killed in battle at the Gambia.

He meets a party at the hospitable board. Every topic arises but that which he expects as the most obvious,—the state of universal peril. He is urged to plan excursions: he must visit the Gambia, run down to the Bananas, or make a tour round the Peninsula; and, if he be a man of nerve, must venture across the river to court the rather hazardous hospitality of the black despot Dalla Mohammedoo. No one hints at an early call from the undertaker. He is alarmed perhaps at the copious proofs at a hot atmosphere upon his brow; his medical friend assures him of the virtue of that most wholesome and unpleasant symptom. From those alone

who delight in the sweets of monopoly, and dread the arrival of new competitors in office or in commerce, does he receive gloomy impressions. I knew an instance. A gentleman who chanced to visit the colony for a brief residence only, encountered a store-keeper, who, ignorant of the fact, at once discovered a new rival. The conversation turned upon the healthiness of Sierra Leone, and the cautious man of business spoke gloomily. "He knew the pestilential nature of the place but too well; he had seen many fall around him; no white man was justified in coming there whose means, however limited, would admit of bare existence in England; to come was a species of suicide."

The stranger listened, then simply asked how long the merchant had himself been a resident.

"Hardly fourteen years," was the reply.

The only approach to a statistic calculation which I had ever met with previous to landing at Sierra Leone was a

formidable one, and recognised a fearful rate of mortality. It was that the entire white population is swept away in three years, and only maintained by new importations.

So general had the usual accounts been, so vague the poetic enlargements, that an important subject promised itself to my investigation in studying from facts the actual effect of a residence in this settlement upon Europeans. The question, which is replete with interest, involves, in the inquiry, attention to the six following topics.

I. The position of the colony in relation to the surrounding country.

II. The individual character of the Peninsula itself in respect to soil and vegetable clothing.

III. The seasons, climate and meteorology.

IV. The causes of its ill reputation.

V. The circumstances operating to divest it of such repute.

VI. The actual state of health among white residents.

I. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCALITY.

It has been stated that both to the north and south of Sierra Leone the African coast lies remarkably low. This flatness extends to several hundred leagues from Senegal to Guinea. The barrier of land stands barely sufficiently high to thrust off the sea, which, rising but a few feet, would cover the whole of the vast continent, leaving merely the mountain-chains above water as islands.* Immeasurable forests, the unchecked growth of centuries, with underground clothed with the rankest vegetation, exclude the sun's rays. Leaves and herbage fall and rot, perpetually increasing the depth of a sour damp soil. The northern section of this line of coast from the Bullom shore is notched with the mouths of rivers, of which the Scarcies, Rio Pongas, Rio Grande,

* Malte Brun.

Gambia, and Senegal are the most important, and which collect with their numerous branches the watery contributions of the woods. The current of the rivers is sluggish, owing to their slight degree of inclination; their channels are generally broad and shallow, and often possess the peculiarity of bars some way up the stream; mud and ooze are deposited profusely upon their sloping banks, and favour the endless multiplication of mangrove. This banian-like tree runs far into the water, and with its interlacings of roots and root-branches forms a complete *seine*, detaining such masses of putrefying matter, animal and vegetable, as float on the stream. To the south, the Sherbro' river is the principal; it is of great size, and empties itself into the Atlantic upon the borders of the Peninsula. Many streams occur to Guinea, more remarkable for the slave-traffic carried on by their means, than for magnitude. Inland, the surface of the country continues monotonously flat, and green with endless forests.

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fervid heat is tempered by the periodical rains alone, excepting immediately upon the sea-shore, or near the rivers, where the sea and land breezes are felt; they cannot penetrate far into the wilderness of woods.

The air abounds in moisture, particles being inexhaustibly supplied from the swampy bush. Little can be augured of this region favourable to a constitution adapted to a European climate. It is from the fact of Sierra Leone being dissimilar in aspect and character, and moreover cut off by natural barriers from the evil influence of this surrounding country, that it deserves attention; conclusions inevitably drawn from considerations of the one region being totally inapplicable to the other.

The Peninsula disowns connexion with this large surface of low land: it springs upwards in high and insolent rocks; like a citadel, it stands encircled by moat, haughtily touching the continent by a communication of barely five miles. Thus

the greater part of the colony is bathed by the salt water of the ocean. The Atlantic washes the entire coast from Cape Sierra Leone to its southern limit: and against the whole of the northern shore, open to the sea, beat the waves of the estuary, itself fifteen miles in width to Leopard's Island; and gradually tapering to six or seven miles where it receives the streams of the Port Logo, Rokel, and Bunce rivers. Thus the only assailable faces of the citadel are, that opposite to the distant Bullom shore, and that nearly divided from the main land by the Bunce river.

The prevalent winds are from the west and north-west, or from the east and south-east. The two first pass over the bosom of the ocean full upon Sierra Leone, and can bring no contagion. The Bullom shore lies due north; its atmosphere is seldom wafted across the arm of the sea to the British. An idea is extant that disease has originated in malaria brought thence by the north wind. When this

idea was in vigour, various suggestions were offered for repelling the future intrusion of death from that quarter. Two are ingenious and merit notice. The first proposal rested upon the neutralising virtue of carbonic acid gas; it was, that a series of lime-kilns should be forthwith constructed upon the opposite shore of the Bulloms for some miles; a highly useful plan, excepting that no limestone or coal occurs in that part of the world, calcined sea-shells being the substitute for lime.

A second projector considered these pastiles cumbrous; and deemed a mere wall in their stead, of thirty feet in height and sixteen or twenty miles in length, a sufficient stumbling-block to the travelling miasma; creeping, as it does, assassin-like, close to the earth. As the savage and independent Bulloms, however, might not desire their territories to be walled in like a nobleman's park, and their malicious chief, rather than detain the infectious air, would rejoice in facilitating

the greatest possible importation of it into the white man's settlement, neither work had been commenced when I left the colony.

On the east and south-east, Nature, the best of nurses and of architects, has exalted a bulwark against the assault of malaria, more efficient than wall or lime-kiln, by casting to the height of some thousand feet a pile of mountains which describe a sweeping arc from Freetown and Kissey to Cape Shilling, near York, at the further extremity of the colony; this town crouching under the protection of the bold elevations. It is not easy, therefore, to discover in what manner or by what inlet the miasmata of the low country can enter to poison Sierra Leone. The mountains of Glamorgan have no celebrity for ague in consequence of their equal vicinity to the swamps of Somersetshire. Whatever detriments to health exist in Sierra Leone must arise from its own internal chemistry.

II. LOCAL CHARACTER.

The external character of the Peninsula of Sierra Leone may be rapidly drawn: a backbone and ribs of rock rising into mountain ridges with abrupt peaks, probably volcanic, and torn into deep valleys fat with exuberant vegetation; palms and locust-trees crowning the loftiest apex of the highest hills. In some spots, chiefly near the sea, belts of low land—some in their natural state, some showing relapse after partial cultivation, none of any considerable extent, unless it be the Maroon grounds—are in the immediate vicinity of the white population. The under strata of rock are a greenish trap, often splitting with tolerably regular fissures into the appearance of basalt, though less perfectly than the similar rock at the Banana Islands and at the Falls of the Rokel. The superincumbent layer is a red light cavernous stone, bearing marks of fusion and highly magnetic. Where the soil is not purely vegetable mould, it consists of argillaceous much mixed with

sand. An important circumstance is the spring-water of Sierra Leone; its purity and wholesome quality are celebrated.

The earth is extravagant in its display of resources, as in every tropical spot where moisture abounds. The paths of the forest near the capital, although daily crushed with footsteps, impede progress by an obstinate renewal of vegetation. The very streets of Freetown, trodden by thousands, at some periods of the year require to be constantly mowed; so rapidly, so perseveringly do the indigo, the jalap, and other plants assert their right to flourish. Around the European districts the ground has been cleared in most directions by conflagration; and the sea breeze, constant in its daily coming, sweeps off much of the vapour that might otherwise linger.

Whatever the face of the country formerly, nothing denotes generation of fatal miasma at the present day. On the distant coast by False Cape, when at sea I have seen mists hanging in the morning:

granting them to be pernicious, it by no means follows that the remote dwellers in Freetown are compelled to travel thither for the unprofitable purpose of inhaling them. They spread immediately below the overhanging forest, upon the shore, and will probably entirely disappear when the woods have been cleared; the time, too, of their appearance is definite,—an early hour in the morning.

The flat ground owned by the Maroons, but not cultivated, lies at the distance of a mile from the western suburb of Freetown. It is a table-land, separated from the capital by a wide ravine or valley, down whose rough bed a rapid stream of the clearest water fights its quarrelsome way through scattered masses of rock to the sea. On the opposite bank spreads a plain, entirely cleared of wood, studded with the wattled huts of the Kroos and Akoos. These are without the shelter or ornament of a garden. Another deep brook, draining off the

moisture from the plain, bounds it; a bridge leads to the capital.

As the only possible point of offence, these Maroon grounds demand particular, if brief, notice. Noxious damps are considered to reach the European residences from it; and some take the precaution of closing the jalousies which front this quarter, on retiring to rest, as well as those facing the estuary and the Bullom shore. The Maroon estates are a wilderness of shrubs, with a profuse carpeting of grass and pine-apple; few forest-trees remain unburnt. Whether from vicinity to the sea, or former clearance of vegetation, the soil presents a less depth of swampy vegetable mould than might have been expected; it contains sand in considerable quantities. Assuming the origin of a foul atmosphere on this ground, Freetown has an advantage in its remote situation, and in the nature of the intervening space. All such fogs as wander eastward must deposit much of their

dense cloud in the depths of the first ravine; much would again be dispersed by the rarefied air of the bare and heated plain; whilst the hollow watered by the second brook would receive a considerable portion of the remainder, and bear it down to the sea at Kroo Creek immediately beneath.

III. SEASONS AND CLIMATE.

Sierra Leone is the middle point between Senegal and Guinea, two countries exposed to the worst tyranny of the sun; observations give to no part of the world an equal intensity of heat. The first deduction from this fact would be, that the British Peninsula endured a similar temperature. On the contrary, the temperature is comparatively low. Attention to its relative position with the continent, its sea-bound shores, its lofty elevations, will account for the difference. The temperature, high as it would be considered in Britain, is moderate in relation to that of the neighbouring country.

At Senegal, on the north, the mercury of the thermometer has stood at 131 deg. of Fahrenheit, and on the Gold Coast, to the south, at 134 deg.;* at Sierra Leone I have never heard of its exceeding 99 deg. in the shade. On the lands directly bordering on the colony it rises to above 100 deg., and even upon the islands in the river it stands at 8 or 9 deg. higher than at Freetown. The enormous mountain masses of the Peninsula present large surfaces to the evaporating influence of the sun, and of the sea and land breezes; the extreme variation is much less than in other parts of Africa, the mercury never falling below 70 deg. whilst at Senegal and Guinea the range is great.

In inter-tropical countries the sun, in passing from south to north, and again returning, affects the year with seasons unknown to the extra-tropical; where its position is always either north or south, the angle only of elevation varying. In

* Malte Brun.

the tropics it becomes vertical twice annually, the interval depending upon the latitude. At Sierra Leone it passes over head in April, and again in August; visiting the Gold Coast earlier in spring, and later in autumn. At the Gambia, the reverse. Whilst the sun is to the south, heat and sunshine hold an uninterrupted reign; but as it rolls northward, it draws together the condensed vapours of the dry season, and pours them upon the earth in an almost unceasing shower; causing the dry and rainy seasons. The rains, on reaching Sierra Leone, have ceased on the Gold Coast, and do not arrive at the Gambia until some weeks afterwards. They are introduced by the peculiar hurricanes named tornadoes; hasty and outrageous, but of brief duration. The air becomes suddenly hot, and close to suffocation; perfect stillness ensues, not an undulation disturbs the heavy dead atmosphere; a gentle wind begins to breathe, its force increases; in a few seconds it bursts into the full crash

of the hurricane, uprooting sturdy trees, carrying away portions of houses, and dashing people to the ground; in less than half-an-hour its fury is completely exhausted. Tornadoes occur chiefly at night, accompanied by sharp lightnings and thunder of appalling violence. In the day, a small dark cloud in the horizon, often compared in size to a man's hand, is its harbinger. A tornado has at once depressed the mercury eight degrees.

The effect of this fearfully sublime phenomenon is to cool the earth and purify the atmosphere, relieving it of excess of electricity. The human body is refreshed by it; but the constitution is apt to be injured by the sudden change in temperature, and humidity; especially as the grateful coolness courts indiscreet exposure of the person. In this respect *only* is the tornado prejudicial to health. This species of storm is most frequent at the commencement and end of the rainy season: it is unknown in Senegal; but in the great desert of Zahara, unaccompanied

by rain, its power of spinning the loose sand into high and travelling columns has often been described.

The rains, once set in, fall with little intermission for four or five months. In one year they have been observed to descend in June on 25 days,
in July on 30,
in August on 29,
in September on 26,
110 days out of 122; the depth of the water being 64·52 inches.

To throw off this superabundance of moisture, Sierra Leone is better adapted than any country in the whole windward coast. Instead of boundless plains, of forests and of swamps, where the water lies and stagnates; a rapid variety of rock and valley, of mountain and ravine, disperses the torrents, and urges them down to the sea. The absolute period of the rains is not regarded as unhealthy, but that of their coming and their cessation. The human constitution is generally sound and undisturbed during the

wettest months. The cause of disease must not therefore be attributed to any morbid quality in the pluvial deposit, but to hasty changes from heat to damp, and from damp to heat. Very slight difference in actual temperature exists between the two seasons. The *mercury* of the thermometer ranges tolerably freely and equably in each month of the year; a fact, however, which the bodily sensations would lead us to doubt. Prevalence of wind loaded with moisture chills severely; the skin is exposed to a perpetual succession of watery particles, which are perpetually evaporated. Blanket dresses are adopted by the Europeans; and with the thermometer at 70 deg. stoves and fires are indispensable. I have luxuriated in great-coat and travelling-cloak even in tropical Africa in June.

The dry season is a long summer; the weather varies little. The delicious uniformity of the sea and land breezes is occasionally interrupted by a harmattan. This wind, in some respects analogous to

the sirocco of the Desert and the Mediterranean in its dry quality, otherwise differs.* It is most usual in the solstices, and hurries from the parched country of the east, below the Kong Mountains. Its origin as yet remains to be investigated. Its character is curious; although not a particle of dew, not a drop of rain falls during its continuance, haziness obscures the sky. Its evaporating power is remarkable, and destructive to vegetable life. The juices of growing trees are carried off, until the leaves wither and fall; seasoned wood in furniture warps and cracks; the skin loses its moisture, the eyes, lips, and nostrils become sore and irritated from this cause. The negroes feel its severity, as a European feels a frost; but the Europeans consider the inconveniences of a harmattan fully compensated by the boon of unwonted coolness. It has, too, positive virtues; it

* The barometer indicates scarcely any variation throughout the year; some observers say, none whatever. Dr. Winterbottom gives a curious idea concerning it.

counteracts fevers, small-pox, and cutaneous disorders: such as are suffering from these diseases recover during a harmattan; and where fever scares the white man, and small-pox and craw-craw oppress the blacks, the benefit of this wind is highly appreciated.

As the division of the year is into seasons different in different latitudes, so day and night * have uniform distinctions, separate from mere light and darkness, heat and cold. These rest on the uniform direction of the winds. The vast surface of the continent of Africa having been heated by the sun in its daily journey towards the Atlantic, is overspread with a rarefied atmosphere, which, on cooling at its departure in the west, is condensed, and draws a volume of air from the ocean. Thus, at Sierra Leone, the sea-breeze

* In Sierra Leone, the day and night are of nearly equal length. The sun never remains above the horizon beyond 12½ hours nor less than 11½. As twilight does not linger in these latitudes, darkness sets in before seven o'clock in the evening throughout the year.

arises daily at about nine o'clock, breathing its first freshness upon the mountains of the colony in its passage to the interior. Meanwhile, the western atmosphere becomes heated and rarefied in its turn, and when the expansive power of the sun is further removed, the morning loan is drawn back again; hence the land-breeze at night.

This land-breeze is not so refreshing as the sea-breeze; it has acquired warmth in the parched interior; but, owing to the mountain walls of Sierra Leone on the land side, it arrives at the colony by the wide and cool channel of the river. The human system feels unspeakable oppression at night: but perhaps the least tolerable point of time is between sun-rise and nine o'clock in the morning, when the current of air from inland has ceased, and that from the ocean has not arisen to mitigate the intensity of the sun's rays.

The generation and circulation of air is a matter of infinite importance. Besides the favourable position of Sierra

Leone with respect to the daily breezes, its internal structure of hill and valley, enjoying different and ever varying temperatures, necessarily creates local currents. The hill-tops feel the vehemence of the sun long before it penetrates the sheltered lowlands; the rarefaction is unequally distributed; the equilibrum is constantly disturbed. A walk of ten minutes will give a difference of two degrees of heat.

Four facts then are indisputable.

First, that if the temperature of the Peninsula is high to European experience, it is relatively low; considerably lower, than that of any adjacent spot on the coast, and exceedingly lower than that of most countries of Africa within the tropics.

Secondly, that the extreme variation of temperature is slight.

Thirdly, that its situation secures the fullest benefit of the wholesome sea-breezes, and rescues it from the worst quality of the land-wind.

Lastly, that its rugged surface forbids the stagnation of still hot air, which broods and putrefies over the flats of the continent; and at the same time generates healthy local currents in the atmosphere.

IV. CAUSES OF THE UNHEALTHY REPUTATION OF THE COLONY.

Strong and general opinions are usually built upon facts. With regard to this settlement, these were neither few nor light. Sierra Leone was at one time deemed our tropical Walcheren. Many of the melancholy causes which established this opinion were particular ones, arising from temporary circumstances which have long ceased to exist. The inferences hastily drawn from them have been incorrectly considered as *permanently* establishing the unhealthy character of Sierra Leone: a fundamental error.

The fatal mistake * attending the first large colonisation by the Nova Scotia

* Voyages of A. M. Falconbridge, in 1791, 2, 3.

ttlers has been detailed. The case of s luckless people was at once held as ndemnatory of the colony. They were rcely landed when disease invaded em, and death removed hundreds. neir sufferings and mortality, the reason known, excited commiseration in Eng- nd; and the story from the lips of sur- vors may still create a shudder. The rrative is striking on the spot itself, here the routine of good health is now ever so interrupted; where every present rcumstance throws an appearance of ble over the history; where the Ma- ons, whose community arrived, under ifferent management, within eight years f the Settlers, have experienced no in- onveniences whatever; and to which Mandingos and Foulahs voluntarily flock or residence, coming as they do from ountries essentially different in character nd climate. Investigation into the case f the Settlers explains every difficulty. Eleven hundred were put ashore without helter or means of obtaining it; the rank

jungle and forest were not then cleared; the rainy season, bursting upon the emigrants, prevented immediate clearance of the ground, and the erection of dwellings at the time when the floods rendered them most necessary. Food and clothing were deficient, and to many, unattainable. Privation and disease spread during the four months of the rains. Sick men lay exposed on the bare ground, or crawled beneath the bushes for protection. If many died, few expected to survive. At once, out of eleven or twelve hundred, seven hundred were sick, and six or seven died daily.

Mrs. Falconbridge states that at this time a vessel arrived from England; the starved multitude hailed the sight, considering it to be the promised store-ship: the cargo, however, had been despatched by the patrons of agriculture, who knew that Africa was a hot country; it consisted of watering-pots. This, be it remembered, was during the rainy season; so little were the wants of the colonists

understood.* It is not unfair to suspect further mismanagement after such an instance, nor can the climate on this account be stamped with lasting infamy. Tracing the history of the survivors to the present day, when once provided with dwellings and means of support, the Settlers never experienced a second calamity of the same nature. Forty years have now elapsed, and a singularly large number of old men attest the causes of early mortality to have been insulated. The salubrity of Badajoz does not lie under an anathema on account of the carnage which once made its crumbling walls a crowded catacomb.

Instances of great fatality have been selected from the British troops; the white soldier is no longer seen in the settlement, the privates are now all blacks: this is wise; incaution and excess can no longer thin the ranks by secret war. I

* For a minute account of the Settlers' sufferings and their causes, see the Voyages of A. M. Falconbridge, who was on the spot.

learned from an authority which cannot be disputed, some of the unacknowledged causes of the mortality amongst the white soldiery. Custom allowed from time to time the privilege of release from the confinement of the barracks, and a stated number were permitted to stroll at large, with the object of promoting health and cheerfulness. Intemperance* and heedless exposure to every change of weather generated disease. The severity of heat, and the low price of ardent spirits, combined to sacrifice life: in the depth of the rainy season, bodies of soldiers have been found choking the drains of the town, into which they had fallen when intoxicated during the previous night.

Intemperance may be cited as one of the most general and potent causes of disease; profuse perspiration and a thirst

* Rum costs a "cut-money," or thirteen pence, a bottle; "Hodgson's mild ale," the only malt liquor, the same price: with such a choice it is easy to judge to which the lower classes would give preference.

increasing on gratification, easily lead to frequent excesses, even where habits have previously been moderate. Temperance societies did not originate in our colonies under the equator; and legends which tell of the mortality at Sierra Leone in its early days do not narrate many instances of heroic abstemiousness.

The mode of life amongst the first white colonists was a series of experiments. Different climate, and different food, required departure from usual habits. Healthy exercise became fatal fatigue. Morning exposure to the outer air, bracing in England, is prejudicial in Sierra Leone. Champagne, which exhilarates in one temperature, may convey a stream of fever in another. A cooling breeze will refresh here, and there prove fatal. In England, woollen clothing is considered more suitable to winter than summer. In Africa, the person ought to feel it in immediate contact when the air is most sultry. The usual maladies attending colonial infancy were not absent; its constitution strug-

gled with the weakness of childhood; it required nursing; its cravings were not always judicious; but its energies have long since been developed, its vigor confirmed: and the caprices which once led to danger have yielded to experience. The same process has attended all our hot colonies; and, not many years since, the West India Islands might have sympathised with Sierra Leone in the discourtesy which refuses it a favourable word. Merchant-seamen feared a voyage to Jamaica even more than they now fear one to the Malacourie.

I will illustrate the evil result of unbending defiance to the peculiarities of climate. A party of gentlemen at Sierra Leone determined to brave the heat, and insult its power, by a game of cricket, with the thermometer probably at 98 deg. in the shade; they selected the scorching plain of the race-course for the exertions of this exciting sport, and in full exposure to the meridian sun. Twelve or fourteen only blinded them-

selves to the folly. Abundant wines and liqueurs were at hand for refreshment and hospitality. They left the cricket-ground, burning with fever voluntarily sought; and after a fortnight one only is said to have been living. The death of so many was not referred to the right cause, but was instanced as a fresh and melancholy proof of the pestilential climate. Examples might be multiplied.

Of the particular causes of the unhealthy reputation of the colony, one more remains to be noticed,—the mortality amongst the seamen.

This class of men is exposed to every danger of climate, and upon the destruction of life amongst them are founded the most formidable argument on the subject. This destruction has been appalling; cases have occurred in which a crew has been entirely swept away. The wages of a sailor to Sierra Leone are on the highest scale, and difficulty is occasionally found in procuring hands. A fact, however, is established; men who

have once been there, and have seen the real state of the country, seldom object to return.

A few words will explain much. The great loss of life amongst the seamen *does not take place at Sierra Leone.** Although the vessels are nominally chartered to that port, they chiefly seek distant rivers, in the flat unhealthy part of the coast, already distinguished from the Peninsula of the British, and in possession of the savage aborigines. These pestilential streams, far from Sierra Leone, being favourable to the shipment of the teak, or African oak, of the bordering forests, are frequented by the British merchant-ships. They load at factories held by factors through the permission of the native chiefs, who receive for the privilege annual payments. The supply at Sierra Leone is inadequate to the demand. As, however, the merchant and the custom-house are at Freetown,

* See the list of mortality amongst merchant-seamen, in the Appendix, No. 3.

every timber-vessel, although in reality bound to the land of the Sherbro's or Soosoos, must enter at the British custom-house in Sierra Leone. In England all their custom-house papers are consequently made in reference to this arrangement, and to this colony they are chartered. Thus, although anchoring for a single day off the colony, according to custom, and then sailing for the distant Scarcies or Malacourie for a sojourn of many weeks, in Lloyd's list and elsewhere they are simply referred to Sierra Leone. It is in these foul rivers that disease infects a crew: and at Sierra Leone it is notorious, and it is a matter of daily occurrence, that the sick of these timber-ships are sent from the unhealthy country to Freetown for recovery: and, of those who reach the British colony, few die. This circumstance is not generally known in England; where all losses upon the coast *within some hundred miles* are incorrectly connected with Sierra Leone from the circumstance of the formal custom-

house entries. The rivers which receive the greatest proportion of teak-ships are the Malacourie and the Scarcies, both dreaded by seamen; the first particularly: it is a dull stream, bordered by swamps and mangrove, and breathing fogs; prolific only in disease, musquitoes, and the hippopotamus. Its weary heat, its sluggish close atmosphere, its clouds of musquitoes, are attributes never forgotten by the sailor who has lived to tell his experience of the Malacourie.*

Much the same considerations affect the navy. Of the squadron afloat for capturing slave-ships, none visit Sierra Leone excepting to take in supplies, and to fill the water tanks from the delicious

* Collecting at Sierra Leone as large a list of vessels chartered to that colony for three years as could be procured, I subjoin it in the Appendix. No selection was made, many are doubtless omitted; but all which came to my knowledge are inserted, with the number of the crew, the place of loading, and the deaths: a comparison will show the relative mortality in the Sierra Leone traders, and in those which loaded at the Malacourie and Scarcies.

spring at the public fountain at Freetown. In referring to actual cases of disease on board the squadron, every part of the coast, and nearly every river, excepting the Sierra Leone, will be named as the exact locality in which disease broke out. But a striking contrast exists between the present and a former state of health on board our navy, not less on this station than elsewhere. Deaths are rare; and in the only case where an opportunity offered itself to me of inquiring of the medical officer of a man-of-war on the subject, I was assured that no death had happened in his ship during the two years of her cruising upon this station.

The mortality amongst European residents in the West Indies is without doubt in a much greater ratio than in Sierra Leone, but it is less recognised. In our African colony, whose white population scarcely counts a hundred individuals, each fills an ostensible and important situation. Each death is noted, it opens a vacancy, it is officially announced, and ge-

nerally with the appendage of some colonial title. In the West Indies, multitudes expire unknown to all but their relatives. The white society is there so extensive, that no wide chasm is made by a loss which would at once depopulate the white colony of Sierra Leone. Three or four Governors have, however, heightened the infamy of the climate by their death; and in their deaths have been forgotten those who have long discharged onerous functions, and returned to end their days in England. Of the latter, one of the oldest and worthiest friends of the colony still lives. He resided there as far back as 1793, and governed it for several years, at a time when local and temporary influences, now extinct, rendered it more insalubrious than it has since been. Much depends upon the habits and the mental constitution; and predisposing causes may be discovered in most instances where death has occurred. A tranquil mind and a good digestion form a tropical panacea; and Excellencies meet many hindrances to either.

The Governor is generally advanced in years on his appointment. The cares of his government must be peculiarly grinding; where multiplicity of duties, relieved by no soothing pomp, no external dignity, confers the reverse of *otium cum dignitate*. Anxiety is the worst foe to health. I have heard the unfortunate Sir Charles Macarthy cited as a victim to the climate. He was killed by the Ashantees during the war with that people, in their own country, and not in Sierra Leone.*

With regard to *general* causes of inconvenience to Europeans, some are common to all tropical colonies,—difference in

* It is impossible to withhold a tribute of admiration in speaking of a man who won the affection of the negroes, not only under his own government, but amongst the neighbouring independent tribes, to a degree bordering on enthusiasm. The blacks of Sierra Leone adored him; and on hearing of his surprise in the wood, and death by the Ashantees, burned to avenge their "good father" by exterminating the tribe. This feeling of vengeance increased the merciless horrors of that war. His memory is preserved in the freshness of gratitude. Members of distant tribes sought his service—many assumed

climate, seasons, temperature, food, and clothing; the necessity of new tastes, and concession of habit to new modes of living, are not peculiar to the African settlement; they everywhere give a shock to the constitution. Nature has modified the human being to suit different localities; whether by original creation or gradual process, physiologists may speculate. The colouring of the skin marks obvious varieties. The body of the negro suffers less from heat than that of the xanthous variety of mankind. His dark skin *(rete mucosum)* is to the sun's rays what a mound of sand is to a cannon-ball. In a heat which fevers and blisters the white man, the native African remains of corpse-like coldness. The constitution unaccustomed to the fervid tropics must become acclimated, or "sea-

his name. One Sherbro' man said to me, "Macarthy live, I come live here too; good man too much; everybody have much work, much dollar, much laugh. Macarthy dead, I go away—back to Sherbro' country."

soned," after a painful ordeal. Difference of diet would seem suited to different latitudes. Nature generally offers a choice, but experience selects. Animal food appears to be a stimulant most needed where there is least warmth. The Esquimaux and Icelanders consume animal food almost exclusively, and are provided by nature with little vegetable produce; the Negro and Hindoo, on the contrary, live almost exclusively on rice and roots. In the medium temperature of our own latitude the two are combined. When a negro eats animal food, it is generally fish or fowl. "But," said a negro to me, "if a black man does not make a meal on rice for a week, he dies." The more mild, cooling, and simple diet is evidently more congenial to burning latitudes. To this opinion the Europeans do not willingly concede, and rather consider the most nutritious and the most stimulating as adapted to a glowing climate.

The bad character of Sierra Leone, also, tends to operate unfavourably upon

new colonists. The man who believes that he is courting destruction, is not unlikely to meet it. Evil presentiments are successful in working their own fulfilment. This is illustrated in the yellow fever; if the spirits sink, and despondency be not checked, the chance of recovery is much lessened.

Of all sanctions, long-established opinion may be regarded as one of the most rigid; when universal, it is apt to be deemed the inevitable result of unimpeachable fact and correct reasoning.

V. CAUSES OPERATING TO DIVEST THE COLONY OF ITS FORMER UNHEALTHY CHARACTER.

Many of the sources of sickness at an early period of the colony no longer exist. The struggle against the first difficulties of a settlement is over; the nature of the seasons and of the soil are understood, and suitable modes of living more or less adopted. Large districts have been bared of forest; the surface of wild bush

is annually diminished by conflagration. The wide streets of the towns, especially of the capital, are admirably and effectually drained; and the rains, incapable of lying where they fall, are carried down by a multitude of channels to the sea.

The changes of weather, now familiar to the whites, are met by proper change of clothing. The more baneful effects of the climate have been traced to the sudden varieties of temperature and humidity. During the rains, a cumbrous dress of thick flannel repels moisture; and, at all times, a woollen garment next to the skin preserves the uniformity of temperature. The consequence has been, that one period of the year is now scarcely regarded as more injurious than another.

Mad intemperance is no longer popular amongst the better classes; a growing feeling favourable to residence in the climate may be easily perceived, which, if not directly acknowledged in word, is apparent in general contentment, sober enjoy-

ment, and utter absence of fear and nervous anxiety. The yellow fever, the once scourge of the country, has been divested of much of its fearful character since the skill and experience of the medical profession have rendered its real nature familiar, and unfolded means of cure. Its attacks are not unfrequent, but are usually attended with no danger, and seem to be considered much as a cold is regarded in England. Severe cases have rarely occurred for some years, and death does not select one from some hundred patients. Being nearly the sole disease of importance from which Europeans suffer, the interminable list of maladies common in England is apt to excite a shudder of nervous horror in the colonist who revisits his native country.

Antidotes are kindly presented where local evils abound. Amidst the beautiful shrubs of the bush, medicinal plants of healing virtue grow prolifically: the jalap, the castor-oil, and croton-oil plants are weeds found at every step. The jesuits'

bark, containing the principle of quinine, or a bark essentially similar, a tonic and palliative in fevers, is a native of the woods. In addition to the pharmacopœia of civilised practice, the negro is skilled in selection of herbs efficacious in all diseases incident to the country. Amongst the varied productions of Sierra Leone, its sanatory resources are invaluable: the aged women who practise medicine are desirous of throwing a veil of mystery over their craft; but the wood and jungle are open to the botanist, and the laboratory will disclose more secrets than the profound negress would conceal.

VI. PRESENT STATE OF HEALTH.

The colony appears to admit the residence of white men as securely as any of our tropical settlements; more so than many. The general tone of society is the reverse of desponding. "None of us," observed a gentleman to me, "who have lived here, can endure a long visit to England; when there, we are impa-

tient to return." The general feelings of the white colonists, the best test of danger or security, have been already illustrated. But there remains another criterium,—the actual number of deaths for some years past, compared with that of the residents: the real state of mortality, divested of exaggeration or vagueness, and unaffected by bias, will appear by these facts. The official census is, however, incomplete; and the registry of deaths imperfect. It was my wish to procure exact returns; but, although aided by every kind assistance, an imperfect average only was attainable: such as it is, however, it is sufficiently extensive to serve as the foundation for definite conclusions; the correctness of the tables is unimpeachable.* The difficulties attending any search for data, proved the subject to be strangely uninteresting on the spot: of the residents themselves, few are aware of the true state of health; few

* For six tables of health and mortality, see Appendix.

appear to waste a thought on the subject. "After our hospitality," jocosely exclaimed a resident of high colonial station and high pay, "it will be ungrateful should you make known in England the healthy character of the colony, or endeavour to remove the impression derived from old tales of horror; for you might thus lessen our salaries, and cut down our pensions, so properly awarded to men who come here to sacrifice themselves to a cruel climate for the public good." But, facetiousness apart, those who derive pecuniary benefit from the ill reputation of a colony are not likely to be zealous in removing the impression. This is stated merely as a general principle. No European did I meet, whose high honour and integrity would sanction misrepresentation. Fear of diminished income was a witty idea: it could not operate, because the peculiar social disadvantages of the white community, the unusual aggravations of colonial exile, the uncertain com-

munication with England from the absence of regular packets and the want of mails, imperatively require remuneration at least equal to the present scale. An administration which would further reduce the salaries of the public officers at Sierra Leone must be sadly pressed by financial difficulties.

CHAPTER XIX.

VISIT TO THE COUNTRY OF THE TIMMANEES

Curiosity to see Native Towns and witness Native Customs.—Presents.—Bullom Chief, Dalla Mohammedoo — His Treachery. — Canoe Songs.—Jack Tars.—Bance Island.—Slave Factory.—Tasso Island.—Mangroves.—Tombo.—Alligator Bait.—Putrid Food.—Night Walk through a Forest.—Splendid Phosphorescence. — An Apparition.—Boog-a-Boogs.—Sand Fleas.—Caoutchouc.—Vegetable Butter. — Advice. — Port Logo. — A Stranger.—An Invitation.—Departure.

"The African has been pointed out as the connecting link between the Homo Sapiens and his supposed originator the Ourang-Outang."

WINTERBOTTOM.

In contemplating the fulfilment of a promise to visit a friend at Sierra Leone, made before his departure from England in the preceding year, that thirst for adventure, which almost inevitably results

from reading the travels of Bruce, Mungo Park, Laing, Clapperton, and other wanderers through Africa, could not be quenched but by a vague hope that it might be possible in some degree to follow in their steps.

Regnè Caillet, too, whose work has been the subject of infinite controversy, had started upon his singular expedition from the spot which I was about to seek. My secret plan had been rather indefinite and of improbable accomplishment; it was to measure the intervening country between the Mitomba and the Quorra, or Niger, and join Lander. But news of the melancholy fate of that energetic traveller reached us at Freetown, and altogether crushed a purpose which had neither been disclosed nor even matured.

Unable, however, to quit a quarter of the globe so antagonistic in customs, habits, and physiology to all that Europe exhibits, without further experience of its diversities than the British colony afforded, I determined to proceed as far into

the country as might be done by a white man unaided by Government and unprepared for long journeyings. I resolved to plunge amidst a native population, and at least see their wicker and mud towns, observe their primitive manners, penetrate their forests, submit to their superstitions, and claim their hospitality.

Situated as the British settlement is, an hour's rowing in a canoe across the estuary would have thrown me as completely into the extreme of native peculiarities as a journey of a hundred leagues; and into a society as little influenced by the vicinity of Europeans as that of the Esquimaux or Japanese. But, beside the mere satisfaction of ascending a river whose source springs from the mountains of Kong, within thirty miles of that of the celebrated Niger, prudence warned against unnecessary contact with the usurper Dalla Mohammedoo, virtual head of the Bullom tribe. This crafty negro chief, whose policy seems to lie in a species of inactive enmity towards the

British, in order that his profitable trade in slaves may flourish without interruption, resides within a few cannon-shot of Fort Thornton on the opposite shore, but had cut off communication with the whites.

His history would be remarkable in all parts of Europe excepting Turkey, where the slave of one day may become vizier the next. Dalla Mohammedoo, or, as the name is pronounced, Dalla Moodie, is said to have been servant to an Englishman. Report also states that he has visited Liverpool in a ship's employment. Information and improvement resulted; and service with an Englishman, and a voyage to white man's country, uniformly confer a diploma of authority and respect. He possesses a native shrewdness and talent which, in speaking of negroes, we courteously term "cunning." A mind superior to that of his countrymen in general, and better improved under better opportunities; property, too, amounting to wealth where simple habits scarcely permit expense, enabled him to assume a

position, on his return to the Bullom shore, which threw the native king into obscurity. His dependents and armed followers became numerous; the king retired from the exercise of authority, and Dalla Moodie acts as potent Head-man of the Bulloms.

To cross the water and spend a day with Dalla Moodie, appears at one period to have been a favourite holiday excursion with the colonists of Freetown. The universal custom of exchanging presents enabled Englishmen to return home with vouchers for their travels. A dozen of ale formed an acceptable offering, and the guest commonly received from the black Head-man a twisted ring of pure native gold. Shortly before I landed at Sierra Leone, his Excellency the Governor, accompanied by the Chief Justice and other gentlemen, had ventured on paying a visit of ceremony to this doubtful host, and had been surprised by unexpected courtesy and a polite reception, by the English furniture and hangings of his

hut, his refreshments cooked with European complexity, and his exhibition of massive plate, — sights unusual in the abode of a barbarian chief. The confidence shown by this party in trusting to Dalla Moodie's good faith was esteemed by many an approach towards rashness; at all events, their safe return was deemed a matter of congratulation. But since that event, although so recent, this Bullom had destroyed all the confidence which the British had placed in him, by a dark and suspicious proceeding.

A government *employé*, named Mammadoo (Mahomet), a Foulah by nation, but long attached to the British, had been despatched by his Excellency from Freetown with an official communication to this Bullom chief. Instead of returning, days passed by without Mammadoo's reappearance in the English settlement. Suspicions arose, and a messenger was sent to the Bullom shore to discover the cause of his disappearance. Dalla Moodie denied that Mammadoo had ar-

rived, and pleaded entire ignorance of the mission. When, however, further pressed to declare what had become of the man, he admitted that he had seen the Foulah, who, being charged with carrying on intrigues with different chiefs, had been seized on his arrival at the Bullom shore, and sent as a criminal to Teemba, to be tried for the offence by the Foulah king; and that at the hands, therefore, of the Foulah king he must be sought. Now, as no white man is permitted to reach Teemba, the capital of that jealous nation, the excuse of Dalla Moodie for not restoring the man was liable to considerable suspicion.

Matters stood thus at the time of my residence in Sierra Leone. Perfect uncertainty hung over the fate of the unfortunate Mammadoo. I shall not easily forget the melancholy look and the tears of his young wife, a bead-covered mother scarcely fifteen years of age, who, day after day, sought the houses of those, in authority, to inquire after her hus-

band, imploring that he might be restored to herself and her child by those who had sent him over to the Bulloms. It was subsequently my chance, at Magbelly, to learn the real catastrophe from the lips of one who professed to have been an eye-witness of Mammadoo's reception by the black chief, and of his death. This man said, that, upon the arrival of the hapless messenger, he was brought into the presence of Dalla Moodie, who inquired whether he belonged to the English; that, upon an answer in the affirmative, he was thrown on the ground, scourged, and decapitated. The story of his being sent into the interior was a forgery, to blind the eyes of the English; and the whole treatment of the envoy had been devised to degrade our importance in the opinion of the Bulloms. When I returned to England the fact had not been officially ascertained, and doubt was still allowed to cloud so important a proceeding.

Such occurrences must greatly dimi-

nish British influence, where its exercise would be especially valuable. No difficulty could arise in obtaining possession of the belt of land held by these Bulloms. A member of the family of the great king Ali Carlie, of the Port Logos, assured me that Dalla Moodie was detested by the neighbouring chiefs and head-men: he said that this usurper held his power by no right; that with bare permission from the English, who were supposed to favour him, the victorious Ali Carlie would make peace with the tribe against whom he was then waging war, and deliver up the Bullom territory to the English, sending Dalla Moodie himself prisoner to Freetown. This acquisition would cost the British nothing; in their name, Ali Carlie, or any more advisable negro chieftain appointed by the Government, would rule; themselves voluntary vassals.

Such being the state of things, I preferred advancing higher up the country, to making a residence on the Bullom shore. Time did not permit extensive schemes for

adventure, and the period of the year was most unfavourable for river voyagings and forest rambles. Fortunately, it needed not to go far in order to discover the novel and interesting, where all was new and characteristic. Now, as in classical days, Africa boasts "*semper aliquid novi.*" Modern researches have increased its points of interest, not diminished them; no accession to our knowledge of its curiosities, however humble, can be deemed worthless; the gold of its own mountain streams always occurs in minute grains.

Being resolved on a small expedition, friends kindly warned me, but as kindly facilitated the undertaking. The rains had commenced; a season, excepting that at their close, the most unhealthy of the year. Tornadoes were frequent. The natives, who divide the year not astronomically, like Chaldeans and Christians, but meteorologically, like incorrigible pagans, called this period, I believe, "lokko-a-liss," "the evil time." I could not pre-

vail on any friend to accompany me. A little rice and wine, and a small box containing a scanty stock of coarse tobacco-leaves and rum, presents for such chiefs as might fall under contribution for hospitality for myself and men, required no great preparation, and cost but a few cut-monies.

A boat and crew of blacks had been politely placed at my disposal as far as the island of Tombo, which lies about thirty miles to the eastward of Sierra Leone. Of the men, the captain, a sufficiently hideous negro to command awe if not respect, alone enjoyed the power of making himself half intelligible by means of that *lingua Franka* of the coast, the talkee-talkee, as the jargon is sometimes termed.

It was Sunday morning, an appropriate day for setting out on a visit to Pagan-land. On pushing from shore, innumerable canoes and skiffs scudded around on all sides, filled with the holiday-loving blacks of the colony, giving

a lively appearance to the bright estuary. The greater portion of that class of free blacks, named *par excellence*, "the Settlers," consider themselves Bulloms, or speak the Sherbro'-Bullom language: on the Sabbath they are wont to seek their countrymen on the opposite shore; often, it may be feared, in connexion with the subject on which their feelings best harmonize, the slave-market and kidnapping.

But canoes, containing gay parties of every savage tribe in the vicinity, floated by. Naked Kroos, seated in water to the loins, and paddling with a single bat-shaped oar on one side only of their narrow and frail bark; Timmanees, generally also naked when rowing, the best rowers on the coast; Bulloms and Port Logos, with a coarse mat suspended from the summit of a rough pole, and held by the hand, serving for a mainsail crowded in view, in place of the heavy man-of-war and rakish slaver, before Freetown, now sinking beneath the horizon. Several of these canoes, freighted with a joyous cargo,

had mats strained aft over half-hoops, forming a screen from the intolerable sun, and shelter from the now frequent showers. Above them occasionally floated the little red rag votive to Satan; and, from beneath, many a curly skull and grinning mouth of piccaninies and maidens, ghynny dim-a-dys and wanghy kellens,* grey old daddies and gaa mammies,† were protruded as the stranger neared.

But from each and all proceeded the rower's song. No negro spins his canoe through the water without a melody, and, if he be not alone, without the long wild chorus. All sing; and on the rivers of these glowing climes, where all is genial and laughing, as the song breaks upon his ear, the traveller forgets to be a critic. The voices may be harsh when near, the words uncouth, the artists terrible to look upon, the music startling from contempt of all artificial rule; but, as the simple cadence comes floating over the

* Little girls, and pretty young women.

† Old grand-mothers.

water, and the strong chorus is mellowed by distance, when the unities of time and place are remembered, there is something inexpressibly affecting in the strange song; at least I found it so.

As our boat advanced up the arm of the sea, and the opposite shores approached each other, huts of the Bullom became distinct, and natives within hail were perceived indulging in the luxury of bathing. Although ground-sharks are particularly numerous here, and are allowed to prefer the dainty and piquant flesh of a black man to the sickly fibre of the European, the negroes do not hesitate to expose themselves. Individuals have been known voluntarily to encounter the shark in mortal fight in its own element.

My men lightened their labour by uncouth minstrelsy; continuing the song without cessation until we arrived in the afternoon at Tombo, excepting during interruptions occasioned by my questionings, and the slight repast of a handful of boiled rice cold, and a draught of water.

The words of these songs are generally extempore. My captain interpreted several for me. The prevailing subjects were love and irony; occasionally, as will be seen in the sequel, revenge and war formed the theme. A stanza is sung in a loud sostenuto recitative by a single voice; and at its conclusion the whole crew rush into a stormy chorus, at the same instant springing at their oars with renewed vigour. Several of their effusions amused themselves highly; and, as the extempore verse concluded with some pungent and unexpected idea, shouts of laughter delayed their chorus. Their variety of topics is not great. The machinery of love in African bosoms wants the complicated and polished movements by which it is worked in European hearts. The following outlines, as explained to me by the singer, will serve as specimens of their subjects and their taste. One song was of a proud and haughty black damsel, whose feet, jingling as she walked with beads and silver ornaments,

scarcely condescended to touch the earth, and who refused to let her suitors ask her mother for her, until, being left no choice, she was obliged to be content with some "ugly old daddy." Another commemorated the grand dame who had "tongue too much;" so that, not only the enemy feared to attack the town on account of her voice, but even her lovers ran into the bush to escape from the hurricane. The sable voyagers, in passing canoes, often hailed the song proceeding from my boat, and answered with a chorus from stentorian lungs.

Flitting over the ripple of the water, were numerous specimens of a curious butterfly, whose heavy wing, of black streaked with white or dull yellow, had its posterior ends prolonged into long narrow stripes. They touched the crest of the little waves from time to time, like miniature petrels, as if to moisten the wing, and proceeded in their unsteady flight. The interpreter called them Jack Tars, and told several improbable circum-

stances concerning them. He stated that it was impossible to catch them; that they had their birth in the water, spent their lives over its surface, and died without touching land. I could not procure a specimen.

The blue mountains of the south of Sierra Leone were opened upon us far to the south-west, and awakened strong feelings in my Sherbro' men, whose country lies immediately beyond. The abundance of beasts of prey — of chimpanzees, geckos, and of elephants — in the shelter of the mountain forests, was affirmed by those who spoke as eye-witnesses.

In passing over the bar* at the mouth of the river, here some miles in width, the boat ran a-ground: my men threw off their waist-cloths, and, uttering a loud cry, leaped overboard from either side, all at the same instant; some, wading in the shoal water, lifted the boat on their

* The peculiarity in the bars of African rivers, and the cause, are well explained by that excellent geographer, Malte Brun.

shoulders, whilst two swam astern and pushed it onwards.

The sheet of water now divided into two channels, and subsequently into three, forming the Bunce, the Rokel, and the Port Logo rivers. On the right we left Bance Island; a spot peculiarly interesting, as demonstrating to the blacks the happy influence of the British in destroying the slave-trade.

In the memory of many, this island was the principal factory, and, as it may be termed, the bonded warehouse for slaves destined to the West Indian and American markets. Within the walls of a building, still existing, were crowded together the condemned criminal, the kidnapped neighbour, the wife and child of the avaricious, the captive of war, and the transgressing Bundoo-girl. Its use is now of a more wholesome character: it is a timber factory.

We soon left behind many a spot of familiar, but unpliant name, as Marra-Bump, and Tagrim, employed by white

men for timber wharfs. At an island, bearing unwittingly, the poetical appellation of Tasso, large ships were loading in the same trade; this river being navigable for brigs thirty miles above Freetown. Here stands the residence of an English gentleman, who spends his days remote from all but casual intercourse with white men, and surrounded by a faithful population of Timmanees. He was described as of the most cultivated taste, of singular talent, first-rate education, and excellent heart: amongst Europeans, a barrister of unusual power and legal knowledge; amongst his black subjects, an idolized chief. He indulges in literary habits where none else probably understand a letter of the alphabet. I noticed that his house, with projecting eaves and two stories, maintained becoming dignity over the mud huts of the Tassonians. When the assizes take place at Freetown, this gentleman sails down in his schooner-rigged canoe, pleads with an ability that meets no rivalry, and im-

mediately re-embarks for his Timmanee domain.

The river side continues to be densely clothed. Forests grow to the water's edge. For many a mile our course lay between unbroken walls, as it were, of mangrove. This tree, not unlike the laurel in leaf, in some degree illustrates the growth of the Indian banian, dropping from its high branches perpendicular ropy shoots, which, on reaching the ground, take root and become trunks; one mangrove may thus multiply its trunks into a forest. Its most striking peculiarity consists in the belt of oysters which cluster in layers and encase the trunk to the height of two or three feet from the water; they might be mistaken for fungus.

The mangroves cease with the salt-water. They were succeeded by herbaceous trees, having gigantic leaves, resembling those of the aloe, and radiating from a centre. These were so large, and so densely crowded, as to be impenetrable

even to the eye. The monotony of the luxuriant and impervious bush was seldom interrupted by native huts. Occasionally a break discovered small valleys of romantic beauty, or a patch of sand invited the crocodiles to a stroll.

Before reaching Tombo, one of the men exhibited a remarkable degree of *sang-froid*. In adjusting the awning of the boat a pole shod with iron fell, and severely injured his foot. A considerable piece of flesh was partially separated from the outer side of the great-toe. Whilst I tore my handkerchief to bind the wound, he borrowed a clasp-knife from a companion, and, before I could perceive his intention, deliberately cut entirely through the flesh, cast the piece aside, and commenced washing the limb. He was left at Tombo.

Tombo is held by an English gentleman, perhaps the most enterprising and useful of the early colonists. He discovered the value of the teak timber, and created the trade. In teaching the indo-

lent Timmanees the advantage of laborious habits, in converting the idle negro into an active hewer of timber, in accustoming him to voluntary toil of a severe nature, he has proved himself a practical philanthropist. More systematic improvement has resulted from his energy and perseverance than could have been secured by more specious means.

My reception was cordial and hospitable. My host, long a sojourner amongst the natives, had lost dependence upon the luxuries of life; but a welcome, and what Tombo afforded, was at my service. To seize the opportunity offered by the remnant of daylight, a walk was proposed into the forest, whose advanced-guards of shrubs crept to the skirts of the little village. Near the spacious wooden house of the master stood a few huts of Timmanees, from one of which a beautiful and intelligent little fellow, named Rinka, apparently five years of age, with a polished complexion of the deepest black, was summoned to bear my fowling-piece.

We first stepped into the workshop of a Foulah blacksmith. On the bare ground sat the workman; his fine face shaded by plaited ringlets falling to the shoulder, and issuing from beneath a huge peaked cap of different-coloured cloths. His ample folds of white drapery spread on the dust. His legs, encased to the knee in indigo-dyed calico, of voluminous capacity, and thence bare to the feet, were expanded; and between them lay the primitive bellows of two calabashes, surmounted by loose skins, and connected by two bamboo tubes, with a bamboo muzzle. A small heap of charcoal glowed before him, as, by pumping the goat-skins alternately, he poured upon it a continuous stream of air. I was shown some proofs of his ingenuity in repairing different articles of European manufacture.

By the river side I perceived a bait for the alligators, or crocodiles, as they may be perhaps more scientifically called, from the difference between them and the American. Two upright posts fixed into the

sand, sustained the weight of a dead hog stretched across, and suspended by the feet. The smell attracted swarms of these terrible reptiles; and above sixteen might be counted at one time, biting at the carcase, and by their hollow roar inviting additional guests. The hog had been found dead. Some Timmanee servants were suspected of having poisoned it in the hope of being permitted to eat the flesh, when useless as food to the more fastidious white man: that dishonesty might have no chance of reward, the body had been placed as a bait for the crocodiles, and many an opportunity for a rifle-shot was the consequence. These animals are found measuring from fourteen to eighteen feet in length; their armour is nearly black, and in most places impenetrable to a musket-ball.

We entered the bush-path, amongst the countless trees, shrubs, and flowers, whose beautiful arrangement seemed rather the effect of taste and plan, than the caprice of nature. One flowering

shrub particularly attracted my attention; it rather resembled the maple of our hedges, in mode of growth and size, but was studded with flowers of singular and surpassing loveliness; they were shaped like the primrose, but larger. Bright orange in the throat faded into sulphur colour, which again deepened at the circumference of the petal into a brilliant purple. Skeins of countless purple stamens, in silken threads, tipped with orange anthers, falling towards the ground, streamed out far in the slightest current of air, enveloping the shrub with a web of floating rays.

Already legions of grey parrots, high out of shot, were crossing the island on return to their wonted abodes, and filled the forest with their screams, warning us to return whilst it was yet daylight. It is the habit of these noisy birds to forsake the spot of their night's rest at sunrise, seeking some distant forest during the day, and uniformly winging their way back in interminable flocks before sunset.

We continued, however, to advance, finding it impossible to end a walk rife with enchanting scenery; and we threaded the narrow bush-path until we reached a dwelling situated on an open isthmus, the abode of retainers of my host. Here we suffered a short delay. We had waded through some shallows, almost alive with captured fish; and the services of a civil woman, who washed our feet and dried our shoes, detained us until continuance of daylight was hopeless. It became advisable to secure the escort of a Timmanee; and, trusting to his acquaintance with the intricate path, and his better experience in night-walks through the bush, we commenced our return.

We had not proceeded far when we were involved in darkness. Our rashness, however, was amply repaid. The splendour of a walk at night through an African forest cannot be conceived. All is black above, but brightness glows beneath; the ground, wherever a space occurred between trees, appeared carpet-

ed with faint fire, too faint to disperse the gloom; decayed animal and vegetable matter became playful with phosphorescence; small flames glimmered upon the matting of fallen leaves and rotten wood.

Some amusing incidents took place. Once, after an interval of complete obscurity, as we groped onwards, treading closely and silently upon the footsteps of our guides, two eyes were seen a little in front, fearfully glaring on the party. The first and most probable surmise was, that they belonged to a leopard, and that the animal, whose audacity is too constantly experienced to be doubted, awaited our coming. The black man with a gun advanced; the light arose from two projecting ends of a rotten branch of a fallen tree. The little boy, Rinka, proved the most efficient guide; in several instances his power of detecting the scarcely trodden path seemed an instinct, and once his quick perception alone probably saved us from a night's sleep in the bush.

On regaining the abode of my excel-

lent host, he favoured me with much and interesting information respecting the people amongst whom he resided, and those whom I purposed visiting. At a simple repast of grilled fowl, rice, and cassada — for simple tastes are soon acquired amongst those who know no other — numerous illustrative anecdotes were given with a judgment and force of application creditable even to one whose observation had extended through a series of years. He spoke favourably of the independent tribes, who generally suffer under the most unsparing condemnation. Men educated in more refined countries are childishly unwilling to concede much to a negro, and scarcely allow a greater share of intellect to the African than to his fellow-denizen of the woods, the baboon. A false pride in the advantages of civilised life leads too many to seek for the vices alone, and to overlook the simple and primitive virtues, of those who preserve for our observation the habits of their ancient forefathers. A

black man could not even comprehend the meaning of that endless list of vices which refinement invents and patronises; could he do so, it may be doubted whether he would feel harmed by the censure of English moralists. My friend spoke to the following effect:

"You are about to trust yourself amongst men whom you have been accustomed to hear termed savages. These savages I have known and trusted for many years. I dwell in the midst of them; no white man lives near my island, yet my person is as safe as if protected by volumes of statutes. I should consider it a favour if you would try an experiment upon them: for its result I can answer. Go amongst them, and claim their hospitality, without carrying a single present. Travellers have given false impressions of these people in every way: passing through them, and noting their worst peculiarities; but unwilling or unable, from want of residence, to remark their unpretending goodness. In

their progress through the rude villages, they have unwisely delighted to display pomp, and make ostentatious show of their presents to excite respect: of course, the head-men and chiefs, seeing boxes of tobacco and rum, pistols and beads, gunpowder and cotton cloth, naturally expect a portion in return for their own expense in maintaining and lodging the traveller and his retinue. The traveller returns to England, writes his book, abuses the humble hut and spare diet of those who gave him their best, and loudly complains of their exorbitant demands. Do you take no presents: if you offer them, they will be accepted; if you only thank your entertainers for their hut and their food, you will not meet with less kindness; and each house will be equally open to receive you. Their palaces boast no furniture; they sleep on the ground; a mat serves instead of a door. You will eat with them as they eat,—a little boiled rice, a sprinkling of palm-oil, a draught

of water from a calabash. If you cannot be content with this, do not go. For themselves they seldom have more. What they have they will give freely. Offer nothing in return; but, when you revisit to England, see whether even acquaintances will at all times welcome you uninvited to their houses, be happy in supporting you with the best they have as long and as often as you choose to stay with them, and desire no return."

Before retiring to rest, the ravages of the little boog-a-boog* were shown me. This ant, so small as to be nearly invisible, excepting when streaming in thousands in a line up the wall from floor to floor, eats away the wood-work of the door and window-frames; in course of time leaving nothing but a coating of hardened paint. Much of the wainscoting had thus been rendered a mere shell

* Of the different species of termes, or great white ant of Africa, none appeared white, as the name would indicate. Their horny skins varied from light brown to a dark hue, approaching black.

that crumbled on pressure from the finger. The intolerable persecution which I suffered here from the minute sand-flies or *fleas* made me almost desire the entrance of the travelling ant. During the night, the chamber was perfumed by the humble substitute for a candle; it consisted of a bowl filled with the thick fragrant red palm-oil, with a lump of cotton immersed and lighted.

In the morning, a cake of vegetable butter, growing on the island, was put into my hands. In size and shape it resembled a thin cheese; its consistency and colour were perfectly such as would have resulted from a mixture of white soap and pounded slate. The flavour, which I could scarcely prevail on myself to assay, might have belonged to the same undesirable compound.

A large lump of Indian rubber—caoutchouc—lay on the table, also the produce of Tombo. This article, at present acquiring a high value amongst our importations, is not here made an article of com-

merce. Like almost every other produce of the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone, it is scarcely known to exist, or is entirely neglected. It grows plentifully, and may be easily obtained by making incisions into the tree from which it flows, like cream, into calabashes tied underneath; it hardens within a few hours.

My intention had been to make a little excursion to Port Logo, the capital of a chief with whom our Government maintained friendly relations. No difficulty could attend the attempt; that town being much accustomed to the English, and at this very moment it was the residence of a missionary. It lay a day's journey up the Port Logo river. But my good host at Tombo persuaded me that, by altering my plan and ascending the Rokel, which branches off to the east through the three kingdoms of Ali Carlie, Be Simera, and Ba Cobelo, more novelty, more variety, and less sophistication would present themselves. Not being the stated residence of any white men, but remote from

their intercourse, in the heart of an independent population, and approached through the territories of other tribes, the town of Magbelly (or Macbaillie, as the whites of Sierra Leone christen it*) would prove peculiarly interesting. It was the extreme point in the interior to which white men might venture, a Purrah, or law of exclusion, forbidding further advance. A Timmanee town, it had fallen under the sway of the potent black monarch, Ali Carlie, of the Logos; and although, according to refined negro policy, still enjoying the nominal rule of Pa Souba, the old Timmanee Head-man under its original king Ba Cobelo, yet the principal diplomatic and warrior sons of the conqueror lived in it, to watch and regulate the conduct of the grey-haired Pa. I might therefore, perchance, be enabled to witness negro diplomacy and policy.

It happened that, on rising, I found my

* It is a curious circumstance that, in Sierra Leone the whole of the white residents, with few exceptions, bear *Scotch* names.

host already risen, and that he had for some time been engaged with a gentleman from the interior. This gentleman lived at the *Ultima Thule* of white men. Sixteen years' residence on the western coast, marked by assistance of the most valuable kind to the kings above-named, and an adoption of Timmanee language, mode of life, and habits, together with, it was said, so total a separation from white men that he would not eat with them,* had procured him a degree of favour from the native chiefs which others would vainly seek. He kindly took an interest in my desire to examine personally the character and habits of an untaught community, and urged my adopting the proposal of my excellent host. He had obtained the grant of an island several miles beyond the line of exclusion; and being on the best terms, and in frequent correspondence with those most powerful chiefs, Ba Cobelo and Be Simera, in whose territories his island lay, invited me to venture upon a visit to

* A statement disproved in my own experience.

himself, and promised his company and protection still further, to the stupendous fall of the river Rokel, below Meconta, the capital of the negro monarch.

My new friend, to whom my memory will feel grateful for attentions unsought and unrequited, left Tombo, after giving his advice and invitation. My host kindly offered a boat and servants for my use during my absence up the river; and, having liberally added to my little store of provisions, and commanded his men to regard me as their sole master, and in all things to render implicit obedience, took leave, with a cordial expression of wishes for a pleasant excursion, and a safe return to Tombo. My boat once more launched on the bosom of the beautiful Rokel.

CHAPTER XX.

VISIT TO THE COUNTRY OF THE TIMMANEES.

Departure for Magbelly.—River Voyage.—Arrival at Magbelly.—A novel reception.—Da-boo.—Sago.—His departure for the Foulah capital.—A Queen cook.—King Ali Carlie.—A Negro chancellor.—A Timmanee town.—Dress.—Feteeshand charms.—Armour of a Timmanee warrior.—Polygamy.—Ansumana Camera.—Management of wives.—A hint.—Occupations of wives.—Pa Souba.—His magical beard.—An accident.—Ali Mama Caba.——King of Rokel.—Religious conversation.—Town of Rokel.—Cunto Moro.—Value of a tall viceroy—Negro warfare.—Fatalism.—A black man's opinions of whites.—Customs.

"The African has been pointed out as the connecting link between the Homo Sapiens and his supposed originator, the Ouran-Outang."

My indefatigable crew continued pulling at the oars from morning to night without cessation, or other refreshment than the customary cold rice and water.

We passed, without landing, many native villages on each side of the stream; amongst them Rosa and Maharra, mentioned by Major Laing. Several "slave towns,"—collections of huts solely inhabited by slaves,* and the property of wealthy or warlike Timmanees,—were shown me. As from time to time we came in sight of villages, the dark and wild-looking inhabitants flocked together upon the banks to gaze on the white man, whose own curiosity sympathized with theirs. About five hours above Tombo, a large and apparently important town spread its huts on the summit of the left bank of the river. It afforded the first specimen of negro fortification I had yet witnessed. The low wicker wall, coarsely mudded, which ran round its entire circumference,

* A Timmanee humanely, and with good policy, often gives a town and district to his slaves. Excepting in name, and a payment of a small tax, they are virtually free and independent. If deserving, they are ultimately adopted into the tribe. One private individual, Mammadoloo, had four slave-towns.

proved the needlessness of artillery in their sieges. The chief, and a throng of men, women, and children, poured through the opening in the wall to look at us. My men pulled to the opposite side of the stream; but would give no reason for doing so. To try the effect of an unexpected salute, I stood up in the boat, and discharged my fowling-piece. In a few seconds the space was completely cleared, governor and people having made a disorderly retreat into the town.

Sometimes the bush country opened into meadows of long grass, bordered by palms, sulphur wood, red wood, teak, and other common trees; but the domestic plantain and banana seldom refreshed the eye. After wearing out the day in continued progress, we pursued our voyage through some hours of darkness; and the men began to despair of reaching Magbelly that night. I lay exhausted on the boat, too weary to feel further curiosity. The horizontal showers of

fire-flies* that spangled the woods with their capricious flame, the roar of alligators, the dance-song and hollow tom-tom that broke upon the ear as we passed hidden villages, and even the bold recitative of my men, whose chorus was often returned through the gloom by unseen savages, had ceased to stimulate.

A violent concussion awoke me. The boat had struck upon one of the numerous ledges of rock which, occurring from this point for several miles, have earned for the river the native name of Robung-Dakel, or the "river of reefs," corrupted into Rokel. An hour's scraping on these reefs, over which the boat was frequently lifted, as before, by main force, ended our long voyage, by bringing us between two principal towns of the Timmanees, Magbelly and Rokel. The first of these

* Two species were abundant; one large, and often flitting over the highest trees; the other, smaller, and darting over the surface of the ground. The light from the last was permanent, and similar to that of a glow-worm; but the first gave out bright flashes at regular intervals only.

was my destination. I speculated on my reception. I had been assured of hospitality. My host at Tombo had recommended me to seek the hut of Sago, the favourite son of King Ali Carlie, the conqueror of Magbelly, in preference to that of Pa Souba, the old headman, who enjoyed less real authority, although more ostensible power. The black king himself was at war with the Lokkos, a few miles distant. I selected Sago as my patron; having been instructed to enter his house, and claim every possible accommodation. I moreover learned that, should any other hut please me better, the owners would be turned out without ceremony.

Whilst meditating on futurities which a few moments would realize, my captain cried "Hear da! big town live here;" but nothing could be seen or heard; yet we were gliding under a large and fortified town. The man possessed more acute hearing, and, in answer to some one, uttered a loud cry. A rapid dialogue soon ensued between himself and the

Mughellite; in which I could only understand the words Sago, Pootah, and Bocamp—the two latter signifying "a white man," and "Sierra Leone." The boat struck ashore, and a storm of colloquy ensued; both parties being still invisible. When the storm subsided, interpretation followed. Da-boo, Sago's relative, had been on watch, had heard the oars, and hailed. Informed of the Pootah's arrival, he had granted permission to land, and departed for torches. It had rained much; and shivering, even in Africa, I threw a cloak round me, and stepped ashore, as Da-boo returned with a crowd of attendants.

The torches flung their glare upon a short, sturdy man, whose heavy, square, ebony face proved him no Foulah; although his peaked cap and loose Mahometan dress proclaimed him a convert to the faith. Da-boo extended his hand, slightly touching my palm, in the cold but usual form of salutation, and greeted me with the Timmanee phrase, 'Kurio pa.'

The men were left to follow with the small luggage, which underwent from mere curiosity an examination that might have shamed a custom-house officer. Da-boo was a learned man, a "book-man," and might have passed for a Marabout. Travels down to the British settlement had enriched this negro Cadi with a little English, and he was proud of his knowledge; yet, like a true lawyer, he spoke seldom, excepting when inspired by the magic, or "feteesh" of a fee.

Nothing presented analogy to European experience. Ascending the rugged river bank, and entering the midst of huddled huts, much like white-ant hills, Da-boo threaded through the labyrinth, to a small, semicircular, open space. It was surrounded by the royal residences. He advanced to the most stately hovel in the centre of the curve; when he unceremoniously pushed aside the coarse mat, and we entered the abode of the great Sago. It was merely a single circular shed, covered with a conical thatch-

ed roof, supported by posts, and bound by that natural rope, the rattan. Its walls were red mud, its floor was mud,—its sole furniture consisted of two raised banks of hard mud. On one of these, as on a sofa, lay Prince Ansumana Sago, and his favourite spouse; both in profound slumber. The glare of Da-boo's torch awakened the tall warrior, who, on hearing that a Pootah had arrived from Rocamp, sat up deliberately, passed a cotton round his loins, rose, and, with a courtesy and dignity, motioned a welcome. His lady, after "wrapping a mantle round her," departed to order refreshments: for, although the hour was late, Sago invited me to eat. A polyglot conversation followed. His house, or any other in the town, was at my disposal. His mud couch was abandoned for my reception; a few sticks piled in the centre of the floor were lighted, and had scarcely filled the royal hut, which boasted neither chimney nor window, with smoke, when sundry important and grim personages,

roused from their mud mattresses by curiosity to see the white stranger, grouped around.

Sago's hospitality had been claimed at an unfortunate moment. At day-break he was destined to depart for the modern El Dorado,* Teemba, capital of the Foulahs. Having been foiled in an attempt to visit Teemba with Mungo Park's guide, and being now some way on the road towards it, I eagerly claimed permission to accompany; in hopes of enjoying the unusual protection of Sago's escort, and of finding no difficulty in reaching Timbuctoo when once admitted so far into the Foulah country. The dangers of the "path" were urged against the undertaking—the difficult bush—swollen rivers, and swamps, already harassing from the rains. I accepted the difficulties. The wily negro, prompted and supported by all present, used a different argument. He said it would be necessary to visit the

* A sailor, named Adams, is, I believe, the only living Englishman who has reached Teemba.

camp of Ali Carlie, and obtain permission to pass through his territories. He would "love" the white man, and certainly keep him by his side for some months. Lastly, the Foulah king would not receive a white man, especially without large presents, and those which I had brought were few and unworthy. Jealous exclusion of Europeans from the interior forms a great point in Negro policy, and I had already arrived at the limits defined by the "purrah" or "law of nations."

The royal banquet entered, with its cook. It consisted of a fowl hastily killed, split and burnt, and boiled rice, copiously flavoured with palm-oil. Some palm-oil had been boiled with a luscious herb, like parsley; honouring me with a taste of the celebrated "palaver-sauce," a sauce produced at friendly conferences, or "palavers," between kings and great men,—in fact, at Negro diplomatic dinners. The corpulent cook, profuse with symptoms of kitchen heat, advanced, took my hand, and saluted. Her front teeth, chipped away

into the shape of awls, showed her love of ornament. She proved to be Sago's mother; the old favourite queen of King Ali Carlie—now promoted to the office of cooking, and of tending his younger queens. Sago's fingers and mine soon met in friendly intercourse amongst the rice and oil; and mutual good will being thus established, I was left to enjoy the novel repose of a hard mud bank. Fatigue is master of the ceremonies to sleep, and an introduction at once took place. Upon the opposite mud bank lay two young slaves: my entrance had awakened them; they simply turned to look at me, but did not rise. In the morning when I awoke they had already left the hut.

The nation of the Timmanees is extensive and powerful, bordering each bank of the Rokel, touching the Soosoos of the Scarcies, and the territory of the Foulahs to the north and east. The chiefs of Sierra Leone, King Jemmy, King Niambana, Pa Demba, and others, who ceded the peninsula to the British, were of this

nation. They are divided into three tribes, —the Port Logos, Timmanees, and Krangos. Ali Carlie,* the king of the first, is the Napoleon of the tribe, and, by conquest or diplomacy, has acquired fame and enlarged his dominion. The town of Magbelly is one of Ali Carlie's acquisitions; and his usurped authority is maintained by the residences of his most warlike and influential relations. His sons, Sago, Mammadoo, Camera the eldest, or "the old man," (really only twenty-four or five years of age,) and his brothers, live at Magbelly; and, what is most important, Da-boo, his nephew, and probable successor to the diadem: for the Timmanees hold age in such respect, that as the very name of *son* implies comparative youth and immediate inferiority, no son can suc-

* Ali Carlie, a corruption of "Al Caadi," the supreme judge—a permanent title; not, as Major Laing explains it, "Father of his People," a name earned by an individual on account of his paternal rule. Pa or Ba signifies lord or father. Fatima Breemah is the *matronymic* of the present Ali Carlie.

ceed the father as chief. Perhaps, too, their peculiar scorn for slavery may create a jealousy of hereditary power.

Da-boo is a remarkable man. His intellectual ascendancy and influence are everywhere acknowledged: distant nations, even the Foulahs, respect his decisions. Pa Souba I discovered to be a mere instrument of his guiding. Da-boo persisted in asserting perfect knowledge of English law, as well as that of the Soosoos, Foulahs, Timmanees, and Bulloms. Unluckily, he explained; "All law was simple, and the same throughout the world — an enforcement of justice and equity:" his practice, however, rather differed from his definition. I have been highly amused, whilst his guest, by the sly visits of anxious plaintiffs in the morning to the hovel of this negro judge, followed by those of equally sly defendants: each prudently prefacing his entreaty for justice by a present, and cautiously drawing from beneath his cotton the tobacco, salt, or kola-seeds. Then, as

we reclined at noon at the gate of judgment, under the rude piazza upon mud banks, the impartial face of Da-boo satisfied each. After listening calmly to the quarrelsome "palaver" of both parties, Da-boo would close the palaver with a speech fluently spoken, and in a sonorous voice. To the wondering crowd he was evidently eloquent; even from the lips of the attentive Mahometan he would draw an occasional "Bis-millah!" As each clandestine interview with the litigants brought him fresh presents, Da-boo generally deferred judgment: he told me that the case which I heard argued, one of "debt palaver," would probably require daily hearings and daily presents for many moons.

Magbelly was mentioned as the furthest point to which white men were freely allowed to penetrate. The blacks profess strong dread of white man's cupidity. This exclusion is enforced lest a knowledge of the resources of the country, particularly of its camwood forests, should tempt to conquest or fraud.

According to my informant, white men would shed blood for the smallest gain: —"White man love drink blood, love kill him brother. When white man fight he kill: love blood-palaver* too much." Excepting at the sacking of a town, the negro warrior is more intent on capturing slaves, than on slaughter. A warfare of years may depopulate territories, with the loss of but few lives.

Magbelly, I found to be a fortified town. A wall of wicker-work, plastered with mud, runs round the greater part of its circuit; a formidable bulwark to a negro. Small outlets, barricaded at night by a few stakes, serve as common entrances in peace, and sally-ports in war. The defence mainly consists in the narrow paths approaching it through the forest, winding in many curves, and allowing the advance of a single man only

* The word "palaver" seldom refers to speaking—it is of universal application, a universal category; res, ens, hypostasis. "Sauce-palaver," is abuse. "Wet-palaver," is rain. "Gallows-palaver," an execution. "Marry-palaver," a wedding. "Child-palaver," a birth.

at a time. They are generally blocked by vegetation, requiring the use of a pioneer's cutlass. The town is completely hidden from sight at a distance of a few yards. Once approached, however, (and in sudden surprisals African strategy consists,) so that a lighted bamboo torch can be jerked over the low wall upon the dry boughs and thatch of the densely-crowded huts, conflagration rapidly spreads, and annihilates the whole town.

The huts, aggregated so that a passage through them is not always easy, and arranged without the slightest order, are square, or sometimes circular, of stake-work matted and mudded. They generally boast but one chamber; sometimes a partial division is effected by a low wall inside the hut. Inclined planes of mud are the sole seats and resting-places; mats suspended at the entrance, the only door; a cutlass, calabashes, and an iron pot, obtained from the Foulahs, or even from the English, with rude oblong baskets for holding salt, constitute the furniture.

Each hut usually boasts a clumsy piazza, with mud couches. Here, upon grass mats, or in net-work hammocks of palm-rope, the indolent inhabitants recline throughout the day, sleeping much; the younger girls, and even matrons, playing some easy game, as the favourite Kyungee-bel, or game of palm-nuts; or holding gossip-palaver; or listening, with the intentness of children, to fables of wily old goats, false-hearted leopards, or garrulous elephants.

Their dress partakes of the most ultra simplicity, and of the Foulah drapery, according as the individuals are pagan or converts. But the females, in every instance, cling to the "simplex munditiis" which is found in all other tribes; excepting the scarf of the Foulah, and the mantilla of the Jaloff. Children, and nearly all unmarried of either sex, appear abroad unclothed; and full-grown unwedded women patronize no dress, further than the tuntungee, an ornamental narrow sash. Strings, however, of sonorous beads, loose-

ly encircling the waist; many a sparkling necklace, with many a bracelet and silver band above the ancle, and beads and ivory rings profusely interwoven with the hair, flatter the graceful maiden's simple vanity. These bead-belts round the body are the badges of the sex, put on the female infant, and never abandoned under the cotton wrapper of the mother. I have sat looking with admiration at the indefatigable parent, threading beads, and weaving them into bands of beautiful mosaic patterns to the width of three or four inches, for the waist of her little daughter, scarcely a couple of spans in length; for the circlet of bead is placed on the child soon after its birth. Mothers wear long cotton cloths, of various dyes, sometimes as high as the shoulders. The men throw a small cotton round the loins; by the wealthy, who generally become converts, the Mussulman costume of the Foulah is occasionally worn. A compromise between the two, a smock-frock, rudely dyed in yellow or blue patterns, is most

common amongst the better classes. The material is of native manufacture.

The most striking ornaments of a Timmanee are his feteeshes, greegrees, amulets, talismans, and charms.* His neck is loaded with greegrees; he sometimes carries the hair of some dead man of good fame. A square red leather case, containing a relic, or a sentence of grammaree, from the pen of the Marabout, or Foulah bookman, reposes on his breast. Purchased with a handful of salt or gunpowder, or a few kolas, he would not part with it for an armoury of Birmingham muskets. The Timmanee religious faith exhibits a singular combination of reverence for a Supreme Being, respect for Satan, and blind confidence in obeah and sorcery. Occasionally, the

* I have been informed that intercourse with the natives has in some instances communicated a tinge of this superstition to white men. An English gentleman was named as having adopted the constant use of a greegree, and whose nerves would have seriously suffered from the loss of it.

worship of the Evil Principle is joined to a vague acknowledgment of Allah, and his prophet Mammadoo. The leopard's tooth, suspended at the wrist, is not often seen: amongst the Kroos it is universal as a charm; amongst the Timmanees it denotes royal relationship or royal favour. The leopard being the exclusive game of the king, none dares to destroy it without permission, or without presenting the teeth and skin to the sovereign. He generally, however, honours the man who has killed one, with a tooth; a species of royal order of merit. The war-dress of the Timmanee warrior has never been described: it is unique. As capture, and not slaughter, is the object of war, defensive armour is adopted accordingly. The narrow bush-paths prevent battle array; all are single combats: the stronger in the struggle raises his knife,—(a clasp-knife of my own has probably ere this been so employed,)—surrender or death are the horns of the dilemma. A Timmanee assured me his people always fix

upon the last; which may be doubted. Now, to avoid the iron grasp of the cunning adversary, who, hidden by a neighbouring tree, or beneath the fallen branches by the path-side, is ready to spring forward, seize the wanderer from behind, and throw him, the Timmanee arms himself like a porcupine. An iron-spike projects from each wrist, one from each elbow, one from the nape of the neck, and each heel wears a fearful spur; and from the back, where the most formidable attacks are made, projects another, secured by a leather belt round the waist. Should an enemy, therefore, dart upon one so armed, and clasp him, he must inevitably spike himself.

They are polygamists. A vast revolution in other customs must precede the extinction of polygamy. Not only hereditary habit, but established social relations involving comfort, at present unfortunately urge its continuance. Women depend on a husband for maintenance; and whatever the original equality of

numbers between the sexes, warfare and slavery essentially disturb it. Females have no means, as in civilised countries, of procuring their own livelihood. If women captives in war did not enjoy the protection of a husband, slavery or starvation would await them. Again, physical developement favours the evil custom. A woman is generally aged, and cannot hope to be a mother, after the age of thirty; the man is still in full vigour for at least twenty years afterwards. A wife, too, can bless her spouse with but a small family, since an infant is not weaned, nor separated from its mother, for three or four years; for the period of nursing continues until the child can carry upon its head unassisted a calabash of a certain size, full of water, to a certain distance, without spilling it. Whilst one day conversing with the "old man" Camara, the king's eldest son, upon European customs, he inquired closely concerning our gracious monarch, as to how many bars of rum and tobacco a subject gave upon calling

at his hut and claiming hospitality; together with matters equally interesting to a negro prince. "And how many wives has the white man's king?" said he through the interpreter. "One only," I replied. "My father," cried he, starting up, and looking with pride upon the black group,—"my father has eighty-seven wives! but, then, Ali Carlie is a great king — a great warrior! How," resumed the prince, "can the white man's king live with one wife? Can one beat his rice and sift his rice, build his house, take care of his 'funkey,' (or store-room,) and nurse his children?" I replied, that many a white gentleman found one wife more than he could comfortably control. Camara waved his wife-whip, and showed that with *that* "greegree," or talisman, a white man would find little difficulty in preserving order amongst any rational number. Custom leaves no scope for jealousy between the many wives. Where marriage takes place at so early an age as eleven or twelve, or captivity

breaks up a family, the fine tie of sisterly affections can never be bound in strength. The warmth of heart thus checked expands amongst the sister-wives and exhibits the only happy result of a distressing practice. I have noted the peculiar tenderness displayed by the old queen toward her little charge, the king's youngest bride, just captured from the hostile tribe of the Lokkos; a gentle, bashful girl of eleven years of age. And few sights could be more interesting than Quia and Brigas, young wives of Daboo, ever together; and when sitting or walking, encircling each other with their arms. A wife may be bought at any age. Tobacco, worth a few pence, might have united me in the indissoluble bonds of matrimony to children of two or three years, with the sacred sanction of their parents. Even before a child is born, a present to the parents will purchase a contingent interest in it. If a girl, it comes into the world already a wife. In all these cases the mother tends them until

six or seven years of age, when they are assigned to the care of sister-wives: they become independent spouses at eleven or twelve.* Their treatment appears kind; jealousy, and even revenge for infidelity, is usually contented with flogging the lady, and selling the male offender. A great man carries in his hand an uxorial whip: Pa Souba never seemed to lay it down for a moment. A man's comfort depends upon the number and activity of his wives: hired servants are unknown, and male slaves never discharge the duties of the women. Their many useful employments can be illustrated. Walking one day into a hut in Pa Souba's collection of residences, in ignorant defiance of the customary check to intrusion—the word "mooradee," "I am busy," with which a Timmanee woman can at all times prevent the entrance even of her husband,—I

* I have seen several wives under twelve years of age. "In Barbary, women are generally mothers at eleven years."—*Shaw's Travels.* Buffon says, "In the Deccan, boys marry at ten, and their wives at eight yield children."

found a wife sedulously boiling rice and fat for the old Head-man. A song attracted me. In front of another hut were two of his young wives pounding rice, alternately darting up and striking down their long poles. A new house stood near; another wife, an elderly woman, with her daughter, was plastering coatings of wet mud on the wicker walls. Further on, another wife of the old Pa Souba was sifting the rough rice upon a mat in a current of air; whilst one more, sitting under the piazza of the adjoining dwelling, spun the cotton into thread with the simple machinery of the distaff.

One strange result of polygamy is that the filial feelings seem to be directed into a single channel. The father may be an object of pride; but the mother absorbs the affection,—and naturally; for the father has a herd of sons to neglect, the mother is wrapt in one. You may hazard abuse of a man's father, but beware how you "curse his mother;" to her alone he attributes his individuality, and

her name he invariably assumes. The name of Ali Carlie Fatima Breema was that of his mother; none of his sons assume that of himself: Ansumana Sago, is Samuel, son of Sago, the maternal name. His half-brother, also Ansumana, by the same rule, is Camara. Da-boo, too, was an Ansumana. Marriage being the most important point of life in a Timmanee woman, her matronly standing is her highest pride. "Kurio ya,"—"How do you do, mother?" would offend many young ladies of fourteen or fifteen. "Kurio maamee,"—"How are you, grandmother?" would be the more complimentary address. After a few years, when they are twenty-five or thirty, they can claim that most flattering salutation, "Kurio gaa maamee," —"How are you, *old grandmother?*"

On rising in the morning, it was intimated to me that the Pa Souba was troubled because he had not seen the white man. Da-boo conducted me to the mansion of the viceroy, through narrow and crooked alleys. The old man was swing-

ing in his rope hammock, suspended to the eaves of the piazza of a hovel remarkably like an outhouse in a farm-yard. Having glanced at us, to discover whether a present of rum or tobacco was visible, (for he had heard that the white man had brought presents to Magbelly,) and being satisfied, the negro Head-man carelessly resumed his posture. Finding that he did not deign to regard me, I seated myself on the mud settee in perfect indifference. After a long interval, without changing his posture, he muttered some words, which, it seemed, were an inquiry as to what I had brought him. A bar of tobacco* and a bottle of rum conciliated the chief: descending from his hammock, he

* A bar is an indefinite quantity, varying in value to the merchant. The negroes have no metallic currency. Dollars and sovereigns would be beaten into ornaments. A bar of tobacco at my visit consisted of forty leaves tied together; a bar of soap two pounds; of rum, a bottle; of blue cotton, two yards. A bar may also be paid in gunpowder or salt. The white merchant pays in the bar cheapest to himself for the time being; each bar being esteemed by the negro of equal value.

took the present, and hurried into his hovel to hide them in safety. Our interview was short. He simply asked the news from Rocamp, and the price of camwood. I assured him I was no merchant; and found that the assurance gained for me respect and confidence, as relieving me from suspicion of roguery. Pa Souba is a short, square man, with a bleached face and hair almost white. He wore a cotton cap and a loose cotton shirt; and bore in his hand a short-handled whip with many thongs, for the benefit of his numerous consorts. His beard, plaited and curled, is a talisman: it is singular enough in itself; but he believes, and all believe, that upon its continuance depend the lives of the old men in the district; if cut off, they would all die. In front of Pa Souba's hut rose another, without an entrance,—his father's mausoleum. The blacks reverence the dead, and generally bury them under their fire-places, in the centre of their huts. Rice and salt are annually sprinkled over the graves.

White men are so uncommon at Magbelly, that I soon found myself an object of unspeakable terror to the young; and it became a humorous amusement to appear suddenly amidst a party, and witness their instant dispersion. Numerous accidents ensued; but one only serious. Leaving the house of Mammadoo, one of the king's almost innumerable sons, in turning a corner upon the river-bank, I unexpectedly came upon four or five girls who had been drawing water. On perceiving the Pootah, all shrieked, dashed down the full calabashes from their heads, and darted in different directions. One, horror-stricken, sprang backwards, and fell into the wide channel of the Rokel; the water was deep at this spot, and the rapid current carried her down a short distance, when she was rescued by some men who plunged into the stream. To no part of the town could I go without witnessing this alarm; to the grown men and women the sight was more amusing than to myself: mothers, on my approach, would

drag their children from their hiding-places, and laugh at their screams. I found that a white gentleman, a merchant, had shortly before come to Magbelly to traffic for camwood, and that his appearance excited the same sensation.

On the opposite bank of the river stands the populous town of Rokel, the capital of an independent tribe, whose uncouth name defies orthography. Its luckless fate on the preceding year, when it was annihilated and the greater part of its people captured and sold as slaves, had awakened my interest. The king, Ali Mama Caba, a gentle old man, had barely escaped with his life across the river, and has never since ventured to return, but dwells in the secure town of his ally Ali Carlie. He called upon me, and surprised me with tolerably good English and courteous manners. After inviting me to call upon him, and requesting some rum "for his sick wife," the universal excuse of the men for desiring a liquor forbidden to themselves, the venerable king

hastened through the town, proudly wielding a bottle in one hand and a head of tobacco in the other; his wives gathering round him in his progress to congratulate him on his newly-acquired wealth.

The humble hut of the good old king showed more cleanliness and consequent comfort than any I visited. He spoke five languages,—Timmanee, Soosoo, Foulah, English, and French; yet he had not been in the white man's settlement for forty years, and held his accomplishments lightly. His principal topic was religion. He was a convert to the Mahometan faith, as preferable to his native superstitious worship of the devil. He said that the Foulah book* was a good book; but that he supposed white man's book must be better. He wished to know it, but had no means. He asked several questions respecting the coincidence of the Bible and the Koran; whether we believed in Abraham and in Joseph.

* "Book" signifies knowledge, science, as well as religion: in Sierra Leone, a letter or note.

"Joseph," said he, "good man too much —good man pass. Does white man's book say so?" At every agreement between his book and our own he clapped his hands in delight, turning round to his friends and evidently telling them the fact. They as evidently urged him to ask an important question, which he did after a long preface. He said that it had been hidden from the disciples of Mahomet to know the name of the mother of Moses; that their Marabouts and most learned bookmen could never discover it; that Allah, as he heard, had allowed the white man to obtain the sacred syllables, and entreated me to tell him if this were true.

Desire of information, amounting to insatiableness, welcomes the lettered Foulahs; their proselytes daily multiply; they teach Arabic and instruct in the Koran. My rest at night has been delayed, and broken early in the morning, by the loud sing-song of the indefatigable Arabic scholars in a school next to Sago's

house. Sitting cross-legged on the ground before a grave master in a similar posture, the little Timmanees read simultaneously lessons traced upon white boards shaped like the headstones of a grave, each holding one with both hands. Armed with a ferule, the Mahometan pedagogue maintains an enviable discipline. The Timmanees hold the craft of white men in high esteem. Pa Souba earnestly entreated me to undertake the entirely novel structure of a bridge across the Rokel, and asked whether it would cost more than four hundred bars,*—thirty or forty pounds. Their belief extended to the credence of any mechanical or artificial wonders: Camara was astonished at descriptions of ships, of English houses, and especially of windows. Natural phenomena were not so readily received. No assertion made any impression, that, in my own country, water

* They have no idea whatever of the construction of an arch. Their ravines are passed by the trunks of chance-fallen trees; or by wading or swimming.

became so hard when it was cold that a man might walk upon it. "Tongue," said he, when I repeated the fact of ice, "walk too much!"

I took an early opportunity of crossing the river to the hapless town of Rokel. My Isles de Los man and Mammadoo accompanied me. The head-man, Cunto Moro, was a tall gaunt negro judiciously selected by the little old king, Ali Mamee (or Imaun), for his power of increasing the revenue by his height. The custom is for the townspeople to present their governor annually with so much rice as when poured over the head shall reach to the mouth. The heap must have been much more meagre when the king himself stood up than when his long lieutenant served as the standard. Cunto Moro held his hand to me, spoke his "salaam aleikum," and said much of which the interpreter made little intelligible. This chief was hospitable, and set about catching a large muscovy duck for a present; chasing the bird round the court-

yard for a considerable time, to the derangement of his Mahometan robes. His unsuccessful hunt was abruptly ended by the hour of prayer; and leaving the duck for a short respite, he stepped aside, crossed his arms on his chest, and bowing to the east, in the direction of the holy Mecca, chaunted the wonted confession of faith, "Allah illa allah Mammood Resoul Allah!" The reverential posture, the clear sostenuto tones, and simple modulation of the voice in the worship of the Mahometan has a remarkably solemn effect. The prayer over, the chase recommenced, and the duck was captured and delivered to my man.

The town of Rokel exhibits the usual mass of small huts without arrangement. Cunto Moro, the Head-man, accompanied me through it; he particularly directed my attention to the defences on the forest side,—barricades of stout stakes. Ruins were intermingled with the huts, and portions of burnt wood-work told of an extensive conflagration. The story was

melancholy. The warlike Sherbro's, to which nation four of my men belonged, had recently invaded the territories under their mulatto king, Caulker,* the grandson of an Englishman, and had fallen upon the unguarded Rokel, which became a prey to the flames. The mercies extended to a stormed town are not more tender in Africa than in Europe. The inhabitants, who could not escape across the river to Magbelly, perished or were made slaves; the town was reduced to ashes; the Sherbro's retreated to their own country loaded with spoil, and Rokel immediately rose again. A few weeks will suffice for the building of a large capital.

A man at this place wearing a "gree-gree," or talisman, afforded a good example of fatalism. He maintained that

* A Sherbro' subject of King Caulker spoke with admiration of his energy and warlike talents, but vehemently abused him for his innovation in requiring the Sherbro's to wear trousers; a tyranny as intolerable as that of Peter the Great, when he obliged the Muscovites to shave.

it effectually preserved him from danger. He had seen me load my fowling-piece with a ball; I raised it and pointed it at him. "If I fire," said I, "the ball will certainly pass through your breast, notwithstanding your greegree." He sturdily denied this, and requested me to fire; standing before me with his naked chest fairly offered. I repeated that he would be killed. "If," said he, "Allah does not wish that I should be shot, your ball cannot harm me; if he has decreed that I shall die now, some one else will shoot me if you do not. Fire then, white man," he repeated firmly; "fire!"

My time was spent at Magbelly in listening to "palavers," roaming through the town, entering huts that promised to present new sights and customs, or strolling into the adjacent forest. Much of my intercourse was with those who could not exchange with me many more syllables than the simple salutation; yet much was learnt. Spinning, plastering, bead-stringing by the women; tailoring, and

especially leather-working, by the men, sufficiently excited interest. Timidity and gentleness generally marked the reception of the white man by the women, whose kindness, however, generally offered the calabash of water or the friendly kola-seed. The value of this eloquent seed has been already mentioned.

In conversing with different Timmanees, I obtained much valuable knowledge respecting the opinions entertained by them of white men. They are by no means so favourable as those which white men entertain of themselves. Rapacity, encroachment, roguery, and love of blood would, if really characteristic of ourselves, justify the jealousy of the black man in excluding us from his dominions: unfortunately, their impressions have been chiefly derived from the conduct of white slave-dealers, or of uneducated traders, who, in pursuit of gain and good bargaining with the natives, have sacrificed national repute to their own cupidity.

It is always interesting to trace simi-

larity of costumes ; many Oriental and primitive observances still maintain themselves amongst the Timmanees. They preserve with all rigour the Jewish ordeal of the water of jealousy ;* but do not confine it to cases of suspected fidelity. It establishes the guilt or innocence of those accused of any heinous crime, particularly of sorcery and witchcraft. The sickening draughts of the "red water" acquit or condemn, according to the effect on the system, after the quaffing of many calabashes.

Their daily "palavers" illustrate the phrase of sitting at the "Gate of Judgment ;" and the descriptions of Eastern cities in early ages have often come to my mind, when seeing the young maidens drawing water from the spring, bearing it home in calabashes on the head, or in the sultry heat of the day resting beneath the refreshing shade of a spreading pullom-tree.

Like the Egyptians, they guard the

* See Numbers, v. ver. 11—31.

bodies of their dead; and if they do not embalm the corpse, they anoint it with palm or turtle oil; burying it under their hearths, as the most secure resting-place, and annually sprinkling over it rice and salt. Like the Irish at their wakes, the Timmanees "make cry," as it is called, over the deceased; only interrupting the wail by copious absorption of brisk palm-wine, or of rum if procurable.

As the Italians and Spaniards have each a tutelary saint, so have the Timmanees each a tutelary spirit, attaching itself to an individual through life for his protection. The terrible secret organization of the Purrah will fairly claim comparison with the Vehme Gericht of Germany.

CHAPTER XXI.

VISIT TO THE COUNTRY OF THE TIMMANEES.

Departure for Ro-yel.—A natural Harlequin.—A Devil Temple.—Superstitions.—Army of marching White Ants. — Ro-yel. — Timmanee Debtor. —Painful kindness.—Game of Palm-nuts.—Walk to Rosunt. — Grass Field. — Butterflies. — The Forty Legs.—Rosunt.—The Falls of the Rokel. —Walk through the Forest to Rokonta. — A Tornado. — Night adventure at Ro-yel. — Proposed Expedition to Teemba.—Return to Magbelly.—Pa Souba.—Invitation to become a Timmanee.—A Diplomatic Document.—Ba Cabo.—Threat of Detention.—An Expedient.—Departure from Magbelly.—Awkward adventure of my men at Rokel.—Song of the event and Revenge. —Tombo. — Old Ladies at Machara. — Devil Rocks.—Fear of Poison.—Hints to travellers in Africa.

"The African has been pointed out as the connecting link between the Homo Sapiens and his supposed originator, the Ouran-Outang."

My intention had necessarily limited itself to a hasty visit to Magbelly and Rokel.

The gentleman, however, whom I had fortunately seen at Tombo, and who enjoyed the exclusive privilege of a residence as far in the interior as Ro-yel, had not merely flattered me by a complimentary invitation. Early one morning, at sunrise, I was awakened by a special messenger; he was one of King Besimera's sons, sent by my new friend to Magbelly in order to conduct me to Ro-yel. This "legitimate" enjoyed the advantage of being in the white man's service; an illustration of the simplicity of negro aristocracy.

Without naming my intention of "breaking Purrah" to any one, I delivered my gun, ammunition, and umbrella to the young man, threaded the crooked and as yet unpeopled alleys of the town, and advanced on forbidden ground. One of the natural defences of Magbelly met us in the shape of a deep and wide ravine; happily, the narrow path led towards the trunk of a fallen tree, and allowed a passage, although a hazardous one. After

an hour's walk through forest, and occasionally pieces of ground cultivated for the produce of a few simple roots and herbs, we entered a small village. The Head-man, who together with several old men was indolently reclining under the shelter of his hut, rose to salute us courteously, and spoke to my guide as an acquaintance. This man was piebald; his neck, chest, arm, and hand being mapped in irregular patches of white and black: a mixture of negro and Albino.* The hair had grown entirely grey from age.

After leaving the village, the heat became insupportable; fatigue and thirst increased at every step; the appalling power of the sun being tempered by no sea-breeze, as at Sierra Leone. In vain might effectual shade be expected until we reached Ro-yel. Suddenly, a turn in the path, which lay between a kind of

* A similar monstrosity was publicly exhibited in England some years ago. He was called the "Spotted Boy."

copse of shrubs, discovered the welcome and unexpected sight of a shed beneath a cluster of high trees. It consisted of a small round roof of dry boughs and grass, supported on eight stakes, six or seven feet in height: a little rag attached to a stick floated over it. The shade underneath was a luxury to the eye, and I hastened to enjoy it. My Timmanee guide, guessing the intention, darted forwards and seized my arm, crying, "Sataka live there! Somebody go in, somebody die!"

It proved to be a dedication to the devil, and sacrosanct accordingly; its holy enclosure might not be violated but under large penalty. Satakas, or offerings to the Evil One, meet the traveller at almost every step. Their variety is infinite. Conciliatory talismans protect the person; little flags flutter over the "palaver-house," and guard many a private dwelling from the domiciliary visits of fiends. Rarities are considered acceptable to Satan, and are offered to him.

Not that he is adored; far from it; nor is he thought even respectable, but the reverse. His hostility, however, being terrible, his neutrality is assiduously courted. Chance matters are referred to his agency. Thus, a fallen tree may not on any account be removed by a Timmanee; and, in consequence, a large part of the fatigue attending a walk through their bush-paths arises from these obstacles. If the trunk lie across the foot-way, it must be climbed; if the branches block it up, a circuitous road is made to avoid them. I have seen a small joint of bamboo suspended over the path from a high branch, and dedicated to the Evil Principle; to pass beneath it might entail heavy punishment.

The devil-house, whose shelter I was not permitted to seek, was erected over a small relic of the nest of the warlike white ant,* now abandoned. These boog-

* An excellent author, and generally correct authority, has stated that the *turret*-nest is invariably selected for the site of a devil-house. The

a-boogs being regarded as imps, the servants of Satan, secure this honour for the corpse of their abode. On the apex of the nest lay a small piece of broken white earthenware, an article sufficiently uncommon so far from the English settlement to be considered worthy of Satan's acceptance.

I accidentally discovered the value placed upon claws and feathers of birds of prey as safe charms. When between Magbelly and Ro-yel, I shot a large falcon that wheeled close over head, imprudently relying on the economy of the natives, who never waste powder and shot upon birds, excepting the unfledged cock of Pythagoras. The noisy poultry belonging to a few little huts that were near, appeared to speak gratitude for the destruction of an enemy; and an old man,

above-mentioned, the first I saw, stood, on the contrary, over the conical nest of the great ant. I have noticed them over each. The selection, probably, depends upon the comparative rarity of the particular nest in a particular district. Sometimes the one is most common, sometimes the other.

with several women and children, came forth to greet me. He advanced, raising his hand in astonishment, eyeing the bird, and taking the gun from me for minute examination.* He begged permission to take the two exterior feathers of the wing; and, twisting off the talons, he marched away in triumph, already less endangered by witchcraft and devilry, and singularly surprised that I had not appropriated them for my own spiritual security.

As the most important rule for guarding against the dangers of the bush, I had been warned to keep my eyes continually upon the path. At a short distance from the river-bank opposite to the island of Ro-yel, I experienced the wisdom of this

* The negroes possess bullets only. Mistaking size for power, they most esteem the largest musket and the coarsest powder. My light piece, fine grain, and small shot excited endless curiosity and much ridicule. Da-boo contemptuously smiled at my "piccaniny ball and piccaniny powder." The same preference for the *quot* to the *qualis* makes the African warrior load his Birmingham seven-shilling musket to the muzzle; the gun bursts, and the manufacturer is blamed.

advice. All enemies live upon the ground. The monkeys, apes, and baboons in the trees above, are harmless; but the enormous serpents and innumerable poisonous snakes, guanas, centipedes, scorpions, and termites, and the leopard that lurks by the way-side, demand circumspection.

It was my good fortune to meet with that unusual sight, an army of the great travelling ants in full march. The line of the army proceeded from the summit of a rock overhanging the river which they had perhaps crossed. The main body of the formidable regiment, (not the soldiers,) a continuous stream two inches in width, proceeded across the path, plunging out of sight amongst the grass and underwood. On either flank, at the distance of about an inch, marched a line of the soldiers, as skirmishers; their misproportioned and horny head seemed a serious incumbrance in their movements. These soldiers appeared to maintain the progress of the rest, often striking the ground and hissing very perceptibly, per-

haps to chide or stimulate those that lagged. My companion, on perceiving them, warned me, and himself leaped over the army as far as he could spring. Although observing their singularly disciplined march from a prudent distance, I did not escape without a wound from a sanguinary picquet or advanced skirmisher. The direction of their progress from the river, and their constant perseverance in maintaining a straight line, favoured the statement made to me, that rivers are no obstacles to them; and that they pass the widest streams by collecting and clinging together in a ball, then committing themselves to the water, over which they are wafted by the air. Having watched their singular march for some time, I left them; their line still unbroken, new myriads still pouring upon the path.

The ant-eater is common here, and proves itself a destructive enemy. Hidden near the line of march, it stretches its long glutinous tongue upon the ground and preserves it motionless, until covered by

hundreds of the insects. The tongue is then drawn in, the ants are consumed, and the process is repeated.

At Ro-yel I experienced a most hospitable reception. The little cluster of huts, and the open palaver-house with its funky or rice-loft, defied detection of the European origin of the Head-man. Beneath the shelter of the palaver-house sat a debtor, in the miserable bondage due to his poverty or dishonesty. The Timmanee creditor thrusts the debtor's leg through a hole in a heavy log of plum-wood, and secures it with an iron bolt. The foot would be crushed but for a rope tied to the end of the log, and held by the hands. Walking is scarcely possible, and confinement to one spot becomes as complete as if ensured by walls. This man's wife* constantly tended him, sooth-

* Her voice was singularly melodious and plaintive; most touchingly so. On noticing its exquisite sweetness, I was informed that it resulted from a peculiar disease in the throat to which the women are subject, and which always causes this remarkable and soft tone.

ed him and provided him with food. An unmarried man, totally unable to assist himself, might perish under this novel species of durance.

I entered a hut in which sat five young women, cooking rice over a few lighted twigs. Instantly throwing down the stick with which their grain and fat were stirred, they screamed, and fled through the opposite entrance. The usual coquetry succeeded, the usual peeping from behind the mat, shrieking, laughing, running away, and returning to peep again. Finding that I had quietly seated myself before the caldron, and was tasting their savoury pottage, they dropped in one by one, and at length gained courage to resume their seats on the ground in a circle. They commenced feeding me; each took some rice from the pot, dipped both her hands into the red oil, and rolled the rice between her anointed palms into balls of the size of walnuts. They then by turns thrust the balls into my mouth with a cruel liberality and rapidity, to the amuse-

ment of all parties. I escaped a surfeit by seizing on the board of their favourite game, the kyungee-bel, or, as some called it, gaya, the game of palm-nuts; and by inviting one of my hostesses to a contest, —a temptation not to be resisted.

This simple amusement excites as much ardour amongst the Timmanee girls, and even men, as the mora amongst the Italian peasantry. It depends entirely on skill. A block of wood, a foot or more in length, level on the top, is placed between two persons, who sit on the ground. Twelve holes, in two parallel rows of six each, are burnt into the upper surface; each party claims the six holes or towns next to himself, and is provided with twenty-four palm-nuts, shells, or pebbles, four of which he places in each of his holes as inhabitants. The game commences by one player taking out the four nuts from a hole, and dropping them one by one in the succeeding, from left to right; so that the equal number of inhabitants is immediately disturbed. The second

player does the same, and thus the game is continued. The numbers of inhabitants being now unequal, should a player find that in dropping his nuts, the last one or even two fall into a town which holds fewer than four, the population is captured, and deposited in a large hole, or slave-factory; one being placed at each end of the board for the respective combatants. Whoever succeeds in capturing the whole twenty-four men of his adversary, gains the victory. Of course, the skill of the player consists in selecting the holes from which to take the men to be dropped. The game admits of considerable variety. Whole mornings are thus spent. I found it a pleasant recreation, and consider its merit higher than that of draughts or backgammon. My first teacher was a young Timmanee girl, whose eyes sparkled with merriment at my mistakes and her own victories: neither mistress nor pupil understood each other's language; but the game did not prove less amusing on that account.

In the morning, whilst lying on the mud-bed, the interpreter entered to say that some young women outside had come to request permission to touch the white man's skin, a request easily granted. Accustomed to the scanty garments of their fathers and brothers, they could dispense with my delaying them for much toilette; indeed, their early visit had been purposely made to anticipate it. Fear and coquetry, shrieks and laughter, long preceded their entrance; and in the sequel one only ventured to touch my arm. At first her finger approached it timidly, and was instantly withdrawn with a start, as if from some noxious insect. When improved courage allowed her to stroke the fearful skin, she repeatedly turned to her shrinking companions and exclaimed, "Munno feeno, munno feeno, tighi!" "How very beautiful!" or, as my interpreter most probably ought to have rendered it, "How very singular!"

My friend proposed journeying with me still higher up the country to the

stupendous falls of the river Rokel, near Ro-limery. On the morning of our departure on this excursion, the king's brother, a ferocious-looking negro, oppressed with greegrees, red leather ornaments, and war weapons, arrived at the hut; and in a few weeks the festival of naming the new village at Ro-yel was to collect, according to Timmanee custom, multitudes of natives from the vicinity; when the naturalized subject would be honoured with the presence of the king accompanied with all barbarous pomp and large retinues; a sight which I was much urged to remain and witness.

Preceded by a strong negro, bearing a cutlass for the purpose of clearing the paths, and followed by a few attendants, we crossed to the right bank of the river, and were hidden in the forest. An hour brought us to an extensive grass field or *prairie*, a rare sight. The only tree upon it was the red wood, sparingly scattered. It rises like a bunch of smooth fern; but when grown shows a trunk and very bare

branches bearing tufts of long leaves. The ground was honeycombed with large holes, the abodes of some large burrowing animal, of which I could gain no information; but I imagine, from some vague words of the black man, that it was amphibious. The native guides seemed to fear it, and we hurried on. If it were the famous African ant mentioned by Herodotus as "smaller than dogs and larger than foxes," it is a matter of regret that none made their appearance. A beautiful species of purple crocus was the only flower we saw; it had no leaves. This plain extended for some miles.

On re-entering the forest nothing was so remarkable as clouds of butterflies which choked the air and embedded the ground.* We could not walk without crushing many a valuable specimen under foot.

A strange belief of the Timmanees was related to me as we passed near the spot

* Chiefly two species: the magnificent *papilio phorcas;* and another, a gigantic saffron butterfly with faint brown streaks.

where the tragedy was reported to have taken place. There is a large caterpillar, or scolopendra, I could not learn what, but certainly not the centipede, called in their own language the Forty-legs. The story runs, that if a kola-eater ejects the red astringent juice from his mouth upon the creature, it shrivels up, discharges a faint flash, and both Forty-legs and kola-eater instantly die. Two children had lately been thus destroyed; one had braved the other to the attempt, on promise of standing by. The experiment was made, and both fell dead. My informant, with every opportunity of ascertaining the fact, believed it; and explained its possibility by supposing a copious evolvement of cyanogen. Whether true or false, the belief is interesting because a general one.

When within an hour of Ro-sunt, we were met in the wood by a sinister-looking old negro. Being too anxious to reach a resting-place to loiter, I passed by, simply addressing him with the common salutation; but a somewhat lengthy colloquy

ensued between him and the privileged white man. This chief was an acquaintance, one of King Ba Cobelo's brothers,* and had demanded an explanation of my entering his kinsman's territory.

Long before arriving at the small wicker huts by the river-side at Ro-sunt, the roar of waters had reached us through the forest; and when, at the distance of above two miles, over hill and through bush a roar of cataracts can be heard, the imagination is justified in expecting much. Notwithstanding freedom from cumbrous clothing, faintness and thirst had so completely mastered me that I had with difficulty been prevented from lying on the ground in despair, and allowing the rest of the party to abandon me. The negroes plucked from a tree a quantity of thick medicinal leaves, and placed

* Where a man may possess eighty-seven wives, as Ali Carlie did, brothers, (and cousins who seem to bear the name of brother also,) are innumerable. Excepting by a Head-man, little privilege is assumed in consequence of royal relationship.

them in my hat. The relief to the head was instantaneous; and I was assured that they would always secure against the *coup de soleil*. After several hours spent without shelter or refreshment, on descending a hill of considerable elevation, we welcomed the sight of a few miserable huts. Half-a-dozen women were engaged in fanning the husks from a quantity of rice. We saw no men. Our party obtained no relief here. The women said that there was not a drop of water or palm-wine to be obtained, and motioned us onwards to the next village, which stood near the river. The noise of the falls stimulated me; but on entering the open space surrounded by the huts of Ro-sunt, unable longer to support the heat and fatigue, I sank down at the foot of the Pullom-tree in the centre of the village, and for some time lay almost unconscious. Upon opening my eyes, I beheld several negroes standing around, and at my side sat a young negro woman leaning over me and anxiously watching my countenance; a full calabash

of water awaited me, and half an hour saw us again on foot to recommence our long and adventurous walk. Whilst lying on a mat under the tree, a mother and her young daughter, profusely adorned with beads, issued from a forest path, and advanced to examine the phenomenon. The child, on discovering the monster, screamed terrifically, and in her agony of fear sprang upon her mother's back, clasping her neck and tightly clinging with her legs; she hid her face, and did not cease shrieking until out of sight.

On leaving the shelter of that noble pullom, beneath whose boughs few white men, probably none, had sought refreshment, and never again may seek it, thoughts of other places and times crowded upon me; and as I looked on the wild but picturesque group, the rude huts, the hospitable hand that had brought the calabash of water to the fainting stranger, and remembered that I was about to quit the most inland village which could be visited by me, I hastily cut an initial in the

smooth bark of the pullom-tree. The operation excited intense curiosity; I heard the word "sataka," or Sacred dedication, uttered. Perhaps in that distant village the mysterious engraving may keep alive the memory of the white man when he is far away.

A canoe ferried us across the river about a quarter of a mile below the falls. The sandy bank, giving name to the adjacent village,* shone white from a stratum of large butterflies as numerous as the purple and the saffron had been in the forest-path. We landed on a shelf of red rock full of fissures. Its surface polished by the waters that sweep over in the rainy season, showed intersections of black metallic veins. A small specimen from this rock was sufficiently magnetic to hold a penknife in suspension. The guide led us by a difficult circuitous route, dark from an impenetrable ceiling of foliage, and strewed

* Ro-sunt. Ro is a common prefix to Timmanee towns near the water-side, as Ro-camp (Sierra Leone), Ro-bump, Ro-cond, Ro-limery.

with a deep layer of wet leaves. There existed no path; the wooded hills rose proudly above us, and it was not without much scrambling and uncertainty that we reached the heights crowning the falls near Ro-limery. A torrent of battling waters flashed upon the sight. The river, for some distance confined between barriers of rock, suddenly hurls itself over a precipice, and flings its entire flood downwards to a prodigious depth. Five sturdy points of rock, projecting near the bottom of the fall, meet the hitherto even sheet of water and break it into clouds of mist. Nothing carried over the ledge survives the descent. Trunks of the hardest grained trees never reappear, but are ground to powder; and one of the red camwood dyes the stream below to the colour of blood. Viewed in front, the great breadth of the Rokel diminishes the apparent height, as in the case of Niagara; but the truth is impressed by a side view. This magnificent fall is the most remarkable in this part of Africa; the interest it excites is

much increased by the circumstance that probably fewer living white men have reached it, than have ascended Mont Blanc. This difficulty of access, added to the vicinity of the river's source to that of the Niger,* both springing from the Kong mountains, towards which the country was already commencing its rise; the intrinsic grandeur too of the falls themselves, pouring down between rocks, and forests so luxuriant that festoons of beautiful creepers hung from the branches even to the tempestuous waters and trifled and played with the white spray, threw such a charm over the cataracts that I felt I could no longer have reason to envy those who had seen Niagara alone. Also, there is something peculiarly friendly in the countenance of a well-fed waterfall when the thermometer stands at 100 degrees in the shade.

At its foot, beyond the deep dark basin

* Particularly interesting at a time when the recent and violent death of Lander had but just reached me.

where the fury of the torrent spent itself and yielded to sullen silence, we found a turtle trap of the simplest construction; a weir of stakes cutting off escape from a natural hollow in the rock.

The falls are considered to enjoy the especial patronage of Satan. The perpetual thunder, the awful sublimity, the mist and foam, and particularly the destruction and disappearance of whatever chances to be carried over them, may easily be understood to impress the simple but superstitious natives with fearful associations.

On reluctantly turning our back upon this memorable sight, and upon Meconta the residence of the negro king at a short distance beyond, we threaded the narrow forest-paths on the left side of the river in the territory of King Besimera.* The leopards are numerous here, but did not molest us. Not very far from this district is one, said to be so infested by them as

* For information respecting this potentate and his savage lieges, see the Travels of Major Laing.

to be impassable excepting by large parties. Prodigious serpents, however, disturbed by our footsteps, often shot across the path before us; and the rapid glancing of innumerable reptiles, shining with purple, green, and gold, caused many a harmless start. Difficulty in obtaining refreshment added seriously to our inconvenience; the country, in the language of my informant, "was hungry" that year. We had the good fortune to encounter two grim negroes in the heart of the forest. One bore a bundle of cassada-roots; we greeted him, and although appearing rather surprised at the rencontre, he suffered each to take a root from his little store, which we were glad to peel and eat raw as we pursued our way.

The sultriness had been increasing to this time, and had long threatened a tornado. The hurricane now burst upon us; and we had reason to congratulate ourselves that we met it in the woods instead of an open country. Its alarming violence was much broken by the thick

and lofty trees, whose barrier it rather passed over than penetrated. But from the storm of rain we were not so protected, and a few moments introduced us to the extremes of heat and wet. The vivid lightning and tremendous peals of thunder gave interest to a plight otherwise the reverse of interesting.

After enduring the rain for a couple of hours, we entered, through a long series of posts planted as a fortification, into an enclosure surrounding two or three huts, whose number and poverty scarcely seemed to demand such laboured defences. Our appearance excited so much curiosity and examination, that the women could not at first submit to the simple matter-of-fact process of furnishing a dried gourd-shell filled with water.

At the large town of Ro-kon, or Ro-konta, we were greeted by a Maroon, a cam-wood collector; the only approach towards civilisation, and that a distant one, that we had encountered. He was with difficulty induced to spare us, drench-

the mat and left the hut. The hour was about midnight. Clouds overcast the sky, but frequent scintillations of lightning, more varied in colour than the aurora-borealis, and common in the tornado season, occasionally gave a momentary light. I found my way to the funky, passed it and the adjoining open space, and finding my way through an enclosure of stakes, sought the sand on the river side, separated from the little village by a patch of cut and stunted herbage. But night thoughts in Africa may be more quietly and uninterruptedly enjoyed within doors than without. Whilst standing by the water's edge, I was startled by a deep hollow roar. It was repeated evidently nearer. The intrusion of a leopard upon midnight musings would have been disagreeable, as well as impertinent. It was with no little difficulty that I declined the chance of it. Yet even when once more within the hut, the slight mat on one side, and the open entrance on the other, did not make such a visit impossi-

ble. The roar, however, became more faint, and soon ceased. I learnt that the greeting had probably proceeded from a crocodile, whose domain had been invaded at so unseasonable an hour.

In the morning our breakfast was enlivened and shared by a frolicsome musk-monkey of great beauty.* Whatever the custom of my host with regard to Europeans in general, I had reason to congratulate myself on the pleasure of his society at the table. Whilst preparations were making for my embarkation in a canoe for Magbelly, I shot a bird of glossy black body and crimson throat. It fell into the stream; a spectator, unbidden, instantly plunged into the river, swam to the middle of the current, and brought the bird to land.

At this time a report prevailed that the British Government had offered a reward to any one who would reach Teemba. On the possibility of accomplishing such an enterprise, I spoke much to

* The fur is not very unlike chinchilla.

my naturalised friend, whose experience amongst different tribes rendered his opinions valuable. He admitted difficulty, but considered it feasible; and promised at all hazards to accompany me, should I return to Africa for the purpose of making the attempt. With the Foulah king he may have no direct influence; but the Timmanees almost forget his white origin, in his long residence amongst them, and his perfect acquaintance with their language and customs. The neighbouring kings have reason to value him: in time of considerable danger, his energetic assistance and supply of ammunition won their gratitude. I took leave of this hospitable friend with regret. We may, perhaps, "meet again at Philippi."

The black owner of the canoe, who civilly afforded a passage the whole of the distance to Magbelly, was taking to one of his homes a pretty young bride of about eleven years. The timid girl seemed nervous at the sight of the crocodiles swimming by the side of the ca-

noe, and I could easily forgive her fear; for I grant that, in my opinion, no apparition has ever appeared so calculated to cause a shudder as that of the eyes of the crocodile glaring above the water, followed by the stream of ripple by which the body is traced. Scarcely any part of the animal but the eyes are seen above the surface. A large serpent followed us, swimming for at least half a mile.

The incidents which occurred previous to my quitting Magbelly, were unimportant, excepting as displaying peculiarities of savage life. The night-song and dance, always abruptly ended by dispersion of the timid dancers at the approach of the white monster; the leather-working of the Garankees; spinning by the women and weaving by the men; palavers before the sage Da-boo; displays of wild horsemanship on a richly caparisoned steed,* whose sides suffered severely from the

* The property of Camara, and the only one at Magbelly; the nature of the wooded country rendering horses useless.

sharp point of the stirrup; conversations through interpreters, and attempts to teach Da-boo's favourite wife Quia, English, occupied time to the full. On the last night of my stay, Da-boo returned from Rokel in a state of pagan intoxication; he had been attending the funeral of his sister; a ceremony hidden from white men, but which I should have striven to witness had I arrived in time. "To make cry," or lament, over a dead friend, singularly corresponds with the Irish "wake," both in vociferous grief and in deep draughts. Da-boo's copious potations were intended to honour the manes of the dead;—a tender tribute to a sister's memory.

My last interview with Pa Souba, the Head-man with the talismanic beard, found the old negro abounding in condescension. He inquired through the interpreter as to my object in going up the country and breaking Purrah; and was assured that, as I was neither merchant nor officer in the white man's settlement,

no injurious motive could have influenced me. Our conversation turned upon the improvements that might take place in his district. He eagerly listened to suggestions for bettering the "Waw-waw," or evil bush-paths; sympathised in condemnation of the ravines; repeated his desire for instruction in bridge-making, and even inquired whether the white man could remove the rocks at Ro-limery, so as to convert the cataracts into a level stream; a measure of inestimable advantage to the cam-wood traders, as saving a land-carriage of the goods entirely performed on men's shoulders.

Pa Souba said, that if I would live with the Timmanees, and instruct them in building the bridge, he would spend several hundred bars on the undertaking. He pressed this subject, and offered to give me lands, and to build a house for me. But not being altogether prepared to embark in life as a Pa or Ba — Headman of a Timmanee community — the temptation was withstood and the gene-

rous proposal declined; with the assurance that black men were too sleepy to work, and that a sufficient number of white men would not consider his payment adequate to their risk and labour.

On my rising to depart, the old chief motioned me to resume the seat, spoke to the negroes present, and left the hut in haste. He proposed honouring me with the highest possible token of confidence and regard, by submitting for inspection an official despatch received some weeks before from the English Governor on the coast; similar ones having been forwarded to all the principal chiefs leagued together to exclude the white men from penetrating higher into the country. To one other individual only had he deigned to submit the diplomatic document. Pa Souba returned, flourishing the paper, which to his eyes contained magical and unintelligible hieroglyphics. It was fastened with red tape, and the huge colonial seal excited profound awe. Looking me steadily in the

face, he dictated to the interpreter: "His white brother, the Head-man at Rocamp, (Governor at Sierra Leone,) had sent this book; what did I think of it? could I read it?" As I replaced the important protocol in the chief's hand, he inquired whether I understood it. I replied, that I comprehended some parts of it. The fact was, that without heeding the difference between the Timmanee language and English,* or the incapability of the Timmanees to read any language whatever, (excepting the Foulah modicum of Arabic, confined to a few,) the Governor had simply contrived to procure the conveyance of a formal attorney-phrased dissertation on the inconvenience of "blocking the paths" to white men, and a chain of arguments in favour of a repeal of the Purrah. As Pa Souba had never yet understood the contents of the weighty paper, he intently listened to the interpretation into Timmanee of

* For some idea of the difference, see Appendix, No. I.

such portions of the English as I could myself comprehend. Mistakes in orthography were pardonable, because they stood little chance of being discovered; but the interpreter found some difficulty in translating several idiotisms and such anacoloutha as the following sentence,—"By which we have been subjected, and have greatly suffered both in person and property." My advice was asked, and given; namely, that as the "Purrah" did not depend on himself alone, but was a united determination of several kings and chiefs in combination, he should, on the first opportunity, "make good-palaver for his brother the white man;" and also, that he should write a letter in Timmanee, which might be done in Arabic characters, as a fit reply and send it to the "white Governor-man at Rocamp." The official red-tape routine of European governments seems scarcely suitable to the present state of customs amongst the barbarous tribes of Africa.

Resisting the entreaties of this worthy chief to take up my abode in his domains, I had nearly reached the river side, where my boat lay with her head to the west, when a coarse-featured negro, attended by several other Timmanees, walked up and seized me by the arm, commencing a loud volley of words. The angry intruders proved to be a chief named Ba Cabo, Head-man of a town to the west, and one of the confederates in the Purrah. He fiercely demanded why I had "broken Purrah," especially without having announced my intention; and having said that the affair must come to "big-palaver,"* intimated the impossibility of my being permitted to leave the country until matters were investigated and brought to the proper conclusion. Happily, the precise terms of his denouncements were lost in the brief and reiterated translation of my interpreter.

* "Capital crime," also "capital punishment:" slavery, or an adequate ransom.

"He say big-palaver — big-palaver. He say, come have big-palaver."

References to the friendly chiefs, Daboo, Camara, King Ali Mamee Caba, and Pa Souba, and even the negative permission of King Be-Simera's brother, who saw me at Ro-yel, and of King Ba Cobelo's, whom our party encountered near Rosunt, were worse than useless; they irritated old Ba Cabo the more, since he suspected that these personages had been bribed by presents, of which he had received none. His wrath attained such a height, that I at once charged him with being drunk; a charge bluntly made, and so explanatory of his vehemence that the people at once gave way to a general shout of laughter. I repeated this offensive charge; told him to return to his hut and hide himself; asked if he had not obtained "rum for a sick wife" as an excuse for making himself sick with it in secret; and finally told him to be ashamed of such a degrading exhibition when the sun was not yet half

way up the sky.* His vehemence greatly tranquillized itself on discovering that the bystanders sided with me, rubbing their hands and putting no restraint on their amusement. He demanded a present of tobacco, but was refused on the ground of his inhospitable conduct. Time was pressing, and my first day's voyage as far as Tombo, even with the assistance of the stream, could not be effected during daylight; my impatience therefore to shake off this troublesome chief prompted a humorous means. I threatened to cut off Pa Souba's talismanic beard if I were longer detained. Ba Cabo started; he was an old man, and all the old men would die if the Head-man of Magbelly lost his slender plaited beard. "Would I cut off his beard?" "Certainly." "But I could not if I were bound, or not allowed to see Pa Souba." I replied, "that he might try—white man's book passed black

* The hours are measured by the sun's height: when above head, it is twelve o'clock; at this time about nine in the morning.

man's; and that, although I might not see Pa Souba, by the mother of Moses, I would inevitably cause the said beard to fall, and then Ba Cabo himself would "catch big-palaver."

Whilst reclining in my boat, as it shot down the rapid channel of the river, taking reluctant farewell of the groups of little huts that from time to time broke the line of forest on either side, waving my hand to their inquisitive inhabitants as they crowded to the water-side, and now and then tracing the progress of an alligator or alarming the quiet stream with a shot at various large birds, apparently pelicans, storks, and maraboos,* or flocks of screaming parrots; the loud voices of my men, in never-ending song, whiled away many an hour. This had been the case in ascending the river; but now a remarkable difference of style was appa-

* The adjutant-bird, so called from its grave demeanour; whose solemn air, bald head, and upright posture have gained for it from the negroes the equally appropriate name of their Mahometan vagrant teachers, the Maraboos or Marabouts.

rent. From Sierra Leone to Magbelly the stanzas had each day harped on the same topic,—negro love, or satire. The poetry had been drawn from their inexhaustible stock of facetiousness on the subject of matrimony, or ungallant quizzing of maidens' evil qualities.

After leaving Magbelly, however, the placid drollery of the satire, and the smooth syllables of love-palaver, the soft "yem—yem yea! yem yea oh!" were no longer heard. Instead of this, the captain's discordant voice discharged stanzas with excessive vehemence, often the signal for shouts of applause, or joy accompanied by gestures of defiance; and at the end of each verse of recitative, the whole crew plunged into a mad and deafening chorus. The word "Rokel" was to be detected, and always excited a fresh burst of approbation or of anger; yet each recitative ended with "De wite man, oh!"

Hours elapsed with few intervals of pause, and these suddenly broken in upon

by the same interesting subject, before I interrupted the concert by demanding an explanation. It was obtained with difficulty, and many attempts were made to deceive me. "Sing of proud woman," "Sing of canoe," were given as answers; but with such hesitation that their incorrectness betrayed itself. I insisted upon the truth, and declared that they should have no dollars without it. I farther intimated that they were singing upon an angry subject, and that it concerned Rokel and myself. "White man knows everything!" was the exclamation of surprise, and the important topic was no longer withheld.

It has been already mentioned that four of these men were Sherbro' Bulloms, the tribe which had so miserably destroyed the town of Rokel by fire. They had not accompanied me in my visit to the new town; I had taken the Isles de Los man only. It appeared that on being left behind at Magbelly, when I proceeded to Ro-yel and the falls at Ro-

limery, their pride had been so intoxicated by the sight of the hostile and vanquished town on the opposite bank of the river, lately devastated by their people, that all prudence fled. One, as he confessed with exultation, had been present; had witnessed the flames; had killed, made slaves, and seen the river red. These Sherbro's imprudently crossed to Rokel, hoping to pass for Timmanees: their imperfect *patois* betrayed them; they were seized, bound, and dragged to the palaver-house, and capital punishment appeared inevitable. They resigned themselves. The Isles de Los man, however, persevered until he obtained a hearing from Cunto Moro, who recognised him as an attendant at my previous visit to the town. The mutual hospitalities and presents which had been exchanged between us were recited, and the men claimed as the white man's property.

His eloquence prevailed, and my men excused the rough mode of their expul-

sion from Rokel in compliment to their unexpected release. The wild song down the river had reference to this adventure. It was extempore: each stanza contained a novel idea, in harmony with the feelings of the attentive chorus; whose united voices always repeated the same burden of "Rokel" and "Wite man oh!" I noted down the translation as we descended the stream, in nearly the exact words of the reciter.

Sherbro' fighters walk to Rokel—old women there dressed like men.
Sherbro's walk in—men afraid, run away too much —town burn strong.
Man die in river—catch much handsome young girl, and make "him" wife in Sherbro' country.

When Sherbro's gone, man come back to Rokel and build town.
White man then walk to Magbelly, and bring Sherbro' men with him.
Rokel men look across the river—see Sherbro' man, and are afraid; but Rokel girls laugh.
Girls glad because Sherbro' man handsome too much, and brave too much.

Sherbro's see the Rokel maidens beckon for them
to cross the river.
They go, and the maidens laugh because they love
brave Sherbro' men;
But Rokel men come softly behind—a hundred
upon four:
Sherbro's do not see them—they are winking at the
young girls.

They are bound, and must die.
The Rokel men now laugh; but the young girls
"done laugh," and cry too much.

White man come back—"Strong pass too much:"
Rokel men afraid again.
White man is Sherbro's friend and saves them.
The Rokel men, seeing their enemies go away
safe—"are trouble again;"
But their wives and daughters laugh again and clap
their hands.

The song pursued the theme with threats of a vengeance unfortunately too probable. The men said that their king, Caulker, again intended to attack the ill-fated and unsuspecting town, and give it again to conflagration. Such is negro warfare.

I landed but twice; once at night at a large village called Machara, (if my

orthography be admissible,) separated from the river by a meadow spangled with fire-flies. The depth of darkness was relieved by the glare from a blacksmith's shop. The primitive bellows of calabashes ceased working at my entrance. Fear entered the hearts of the youthful, and curiosity occupied the aged. A messenger came to entreat the "Pootah" to go and show himself to three "old mothers," so antique as to be unable to move. I found them reclining on the bare ground of a hovel round a few dying embers. More repulsive objects cannot be conceived. Extreme and withered age, sunk hollow eyes, and the embossed pattern-work elaborately traced over the loose leathery skin of their naked bodies, punished me for my affability. I inquired their ages; my man said, more than a hundred years.

On repassing the "Sataka" or Devil Rocks in the river below Tombo, at which island I again slept, I made a vigorous but vain attempt to inspect them.

The men asserted that none might land there, and that death would inevitably ensue. A story was told of a white man who had attempted it, but who, in stepping from the boat, was drowned. I challenged the peril; but the men, disobedient on this occasion alone, darted the boat away. They assured me that the whole party would die; if not through the agency of the devil, certainly by assassination. It would have been a religious contempt, and as such punishable by the laws of the country. In vain I pointed out our security, and our speedy arrival within British protection. Emissaries would overtake us there, and secretly administer the slow poison. None, they said, could ever escape. This is most probably true. Negro jealousy of superstitions cannot be evaded. In Freetown itself, or even on shipboard, the slow lingering death-drop could be administered in rice, in water, or by some other means. Life might not at once fail, but the body would waste; and when dissolution came,

it would be attributed to climate, or natural decay. When up the country, made the death of Lander and other African travellers, the subject of frequent conversation. Every Timmanee with whom I conversed, assured me that in each instance violence had merely fulfilled the law to which the natives themselves were subject; and that all who had been killed, had fallen victims to their contempt for native customs, or to their careless ignorance. It is their system to enforce reverence towards their Satakas, by the inevitable destruction or slavery of the offender, white or black; and, without doubt, many who have languished and expired after illness attributed to natural causes, really died from the effects of wasting potions.*

When expeditions for discovery penetrate into Africa, it is not numbers, royal

* The alligator's gall is so deadly, that no native may kill the animal unless in the presence of witnesses, before whom he casts away the gall upon the ground,

favour, or bales of presents, that will guarantee security of person. Nothing can do so but a knowledge of customs and superstitions, and a decent precaution not to offend. It is not wisdom to respect the pagan institutions of the savage; but it is worse than folly to trample openly upon them. To gain extensive information with regard to this still unknown continent, not personal courage, not wide travels, and hasty journeyings, will be sufficient. Study of habits, customs, and language should precede each visit to a new tribe. This may be tedious, but will alone prove effectual. What Burckhardt did to prepare himself for a life amidst Mahometan nations, is even more necessary for all who would sojourn amongst the primitive black men of Nigritia.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX, No. I. LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN FREETOWN.

Of the innumerable tongues used in common intercourse in the capital of Sierra Leone, the following will serve as specimens to philologists.

Numerals.	Sherbro'.	Akoo.	Soosoo.	Timmanee.	Yaloff.
one	bool	aukung	kiring	pin	ben.
two	tring	mallay	firing	prung	ni-ar.
three	raach	metta	shukung	pisaas	ni-at.
four	heol	menná	nani	panlee	ni-an-it.
five	men	marung	shooli	tomat	jurum.
six	men-bool	mayfa	shenni	rokin	jurum-ben.
seven	men-tring	meya or meilla	shooli-firing	day-ring	jurum-ni-ar.
eight	men-rach	meygheo	shooli-ma-shukung	day-saas	jurum-ni-at.
nine	men-heol	maisong	shooli-ma-nani	day-'ng-anlee	jurum-ni-an-it.
ten	waungh	hawar	foo	tofot	fook.
eleven	waung-y-bool	mo-conna	foo-rung-kiring	tofot-awin	fook-a-ben.

twelve	waung-y-tring	magylla	foo-rung-firing	tofot-amarung	fook-a-ni-ar.
thirteen	waung-y-raach	metalla	foo-rung-shukung	tofot-amasaas	fook-a-ni-at.
fourteen	waung-y-heol	menilla	&c.	&c.	&c.
fifteen	waung-y-men	meydugoo	&c.	&c.	&c.
sixteen	waung-y-men-bool	meyney denugoo	&c.	&c.	&c.
seventeen	waung-y-men-tring	metta-gn-ugoo	&c.	&c.	&c.
eighteen	&c.	malle-gn-ugoo	&c.	&c.	&c.
nineteen	&c.	moeod-n-ugoo	&c.	&c.	&c.
20	taunauh	ugoo	mawhonia	tofot-marung	niar-fook.
21		mokollugo			niar-fook-a-ben.
30	My informant could	metallugoo	30 tongas firing	30 tofot-masaas	30 ni-at fook.
40	count no higher.				
50			40 tongas shukung	&c.	40 ni-an-it-fook.
60			&c.	&c.	50 jurum fook.
70			&c.	&c.	&c.
80			&c.	&c.	&c.
90			&c.	&c.	90 jurum-ni-an-it fook
100		100 ogorroo	100 kemmy	100 tofot-tofot	100 tay-mair.

SHERBRO'.

How do you do?	Lemmoo.
Answer.	Umbāā.
Sweet.	Pet.
Sweeter.	Chankey-pet, (literally "pass sweet.")
Sweetest.	Pet-y-pet.

AKOO.

How are you this morning?	Aou-jeery.
I am well, thank you.	Annea-houn-laoori.
Good evening.	Eh! qua-lou.
Yes! I hope you are well this evening.	m̃-m̃-a-lecou-lee.

SOOSOO.

How are you?	ў-māmā?
Answer.	m̃-māma.
Sweet.	Niuhung.
Sweetest.	Niuhung-pisa-bering-bé.
Too sweet.	Niuhung-pisa-nahan-niuhung-bé.
"To sweet" (to love).	Niuhung-fe.
Man.	Ghammy.
Woman.	Ghinny (γυνη).
Boy.	Dimady.
Girl.	Ghinny dimady.
Give me some water.	'nky yea.
Give me some meat.	'nky sooby.
Give me some mutton.	'nky yokky sooby.
Give me some fowls.	'nky tokky.
Give me some plantain.	'nky banāna-uri-bogè-she.

TIMMANEE.

How do you do? (to a man.)	Kurio-pa.
How do you do? (to a married woman.)	Kurio-ya.
How do you do? (to an elderly woman.)	Kurio-māāmee.
How do you do? (to an unmarried girl.)	Kurio-tittie.
Answer.	Bāāh.

Foulahs and Mandingos use the common Arabic.

Salāām aleikum. Answer—Aleiku salaam.

Beside the above languages, many inhabitants understand none but Bassa, Calabar, Congo, Ibbo, Kroo, &c. &c.

The first remarkable fact is the use of the pentenary numeration, obvious in four of the above lists, and to be traced in the fifth, the Akoo. The names of the fingers are totally different. The Timmanees, like the Welsh and others, make m p, interchangeable according to the preceding word's termination. Of the Foulah numerals, lists have been already published. The simplicity of the Yaloff leads to complex words for high numbers; thus, ninety-nine would be "Jurum-ni-an-it-fook-a-jurum-ni-an-it"—Five-and-four-times ten, and five and four. I was assured that the Timmanees counted by sixes. So singular a fact is, unfortunately for the curious, disproved, by the above list.

The "Soosoo," the "Italian of Africa," is extensively spoken to the north and east of Sierra Leone. It is the polite language, answering in its extended cultivation to the French in Europe. As it is understood through the wide districts of Jallonkadoo, of the Bulloms, Timmanees, and Mandingos, it is the best language for the white traveller to learn. Soft in sound, and embracing many vowels, it is wordy in construction; even the degrees of comparison, so different from the simple iteration of the Timmanee and Akoo, involving long parentheses.

The Akoo abound in slight nasals similar to the French, but otherwise euphonious. Timmanees are still found residing in the Peninsula of Sierra Leone, once their property; they are few in number. The vicinity to the colony of their triple nation, and their importance as factors of teak and camwood, on the Rokel and Port Logo rivers, make their language interesting. Indisputably the most musical tribe on the coast, melody in their native tongue might be expected, and my ear admitted it.

No. II

SLAVERY.

The following is a list of slave-ships and their cargoes captured by the British cruisers on the coast, and brought into Sierra Leone for adjudication, from January 1828 to my departure, June 1834.

In 1828.

No. of Slavers.	Under what colours.	Slaves on board.	Adjudication.
6	Spanish	1073	condemned.
10	Brazilian	1793	ditto.
7	Portuguese	958	two restored with cargoes.
2	Netherlands	706	
25		4530	

1829.

5	Spanish	1722	condemned.
10	Brazilian	2888	one restored.
3	Portuguese	333	condemned.
5	Netherlands	602	ditto.
23		5545	

Thirty-two slave-ships were discovered within six weeks, but all escaped. From this time Ne-

therland ships ceased to sail under that flag; the treaty making it piracy.

1830.

No. of Slavers.	Under what colours.	Slaves on board.	Adjudication.
8	Spanish	1725	condemned.
8	Brazilian	1972	ditto.
2	Portuguese	202	ditto.
18		3899	

1831.

7	Spanish	1692	condemned.
1	Brazilian	0	ditto.
1	Portuguese	157	ditto.
9		1849	

A remarkable diminution is apparent in the number of captured slavers compared with preceding years.

1832.

4	Spanish	1483
1	Portuguese	401
5		1884

1833.

7	Spanish	1667
1	Portuguese	350
8		2017

1834, to June.

No. of Slavers.	Under what colours.	Slaves on board.	Adjudication.
2	Spanish	625	

1 Portuguese, the Donna Maria, restored as before mentioned.

In the three years preceding the abandonment of the Black Joke, and similar tenders, the captures appear to have been,

66 slave-ships, containing 13,974 slaves.

In the three subsequent years of the new system,

22 slave-ships, containing 5,750 slaves.

Yet the trade has not slackened; but every account represents the horrible traffic to be progressively increasing. It will be seen that of the numberless slave-ships sailing under French colours, not one occurs in the list of the captured.

The total number of negroes emancipated from the slave-ships and located in Sierra Leone, from 1818 to June 1834, was 29,684.

The greatest speculators in human merchandise are Englishmen, Spaniards, Brazilians, and Portuguese.

No. III.

LONGEVITY AND DEATHS IN SIERRA LEONE.

To illustrate the actual mortality in this celebrated "charnel-house," I present six tables, obtained with difficulty; and if not embracing every individual fact, perfectly correct as far as they extend.

1.

Numbers of deaths from *every possible cause*, amongst the whites; including several seamen sent to the colony sick, from distant rivers. The incorrectness of the church registry makes it impossible to say how few were actual residents. Until 1830, it must be observed, that the white population included several hundred white men in the army: the mortality will not appear by any means startling. The registry is so imperfectly kept, that the following years only are entered.

Year.	Deaths.
1818	18
1819	12
1820	19
1826	25
1827	21
1828	14
1829	41 (an epidemic.)

The white troops were withdrawn.

Year.	Deaths.
1830 . . .	8*
1831 . . .	2†
1832 . . .	4‡
1833 . . .	3
1834§ . . .	3

Of the above, the majority had enjoyed a fair lease of life in the colony.

2.

Number of deaths and *the diseases*, from June 1831 to June 1834.

Year.	Diseases.	Total Deaths.
1831	1 fever, 1 hepat. chron.	2
1832	1 fever, 1 cholera morbus, 2 paral. extr.	4
1833	2 fever, 1 delirium tremens.	
to June 1834	0 fever, 1 childbirth and chron. dys., 1 rupture of abscess on lungs after childbirth, 1 water on the chest, after 23 years' residence, ætat. 65.	3

* One of whom died of intemperance, and two after long confinement in gaol.

† Between May and the end of the year.

‡ One only of the fever.

§ Half-year to June.

This table, which gives three deaths only from the "fatal scourge," the fever, in three years, comprehends, as I was informed, every case of death in the colony. The learned and accomplished medical officer of the forces, Dr. Fergusson, who kindly gave free access to his books, and assisted me in looking through the lists of his extensive colonial practice amongst all colours, commented on the numerous cases of recovery, and extracted those of death. The absence of the colonial surgeon in England for a large portion of the three years threw the entire practice into the hands of the army surgeon for the time. During the remaining months, I could not learn any case of death.

3.

There are six departments of service, exclusive of the governor. At my visit in 1834, I found that *not one* of the heads of either department had owed his appointment to the death of a predecessor.

1. His Excellency the Governor.	Governor Findlay had retired to England in good health after long service in Africa.
2. Chief Justice.	Sir J. Jeffcott recalled.
3. Mixed Commission Court.	1. The Judge had lived 23 years on the coast; since retired on pension. 2. Commissioner of Arbitration.

4. Hon. Colonial Secretary.	In the 15th year of residence.
5. Commissariat.	1. Commissary. 2. Assistant Commissary.
6. Commander-in-chief.	Had resided several years.
7. Head of the Liberated African Department.	In the 18th year of residence.

Of fourteen other gentlemen in prominent official situations, whose length of residence I ascertained, in each case respectively, it was as follows.

	Years.
Registrar	11
Police Magistrate	14
Surgeon to the Forces	14
Colonial Surgeon	8
Writer in Mixed Commission Office	10
Marshal	10
First writer in Secretary's Office	12
Writer in ditto	4
Ditto	4
Hon. Colonial Chaplain	4
Portuguese Consul	6
Navy Victualler	6*
Colonial Architect	10
Late acting Governor	6

Several, whose term of residence was not procured, have long enjoyed life and health in the colony.

* On the coast.

4.

The total census of whites in 1833 was 84. It shall be assumed, in the year following, 1834, at 94.

A resident of some standing favoured me with the names and length of residence of every individual, as far as his knowledge permitted; omitting the military and other officers, whose term of service is variable, and regulated by orders from home, together with recently arrived colonists, upon whose constitution the influence of the climate as yet had no opportunity of proving itself. The total number of *established* white colonists may thus be reduced to about 70. Of these, I could publish by name 48, who were living at my visit, in excellent health; constituting two-thirds of the European population.

The total residence in years, of the 48, amounted to 533, or an average of more than 11 years each. Two-thirds at least, therefore, of the European established residents were still in possession of good health after an average stay of eleven years each.

5.

THE MOST IMPORTANT.

This gives an account of merchant-vessels *entering* (whether merely visiting, or actually loading in the river,) at Sierra Leone custom-house, as far as, with all impartiality, I could discover the circumstances, of name, number of crew, number of

deaths whilst in Africa, and the river in which the vessel actually remained during its stay in the country. The list of ships is a large one. None were omitted whose circumstances I could possibly ascertain, from the end of the year 1830 to my departure in June 1834. Excessive exertion, exposure, and carelessness, combine to make the merchant-seamen peculiarly obnoxious to the worst influences of every latitude, whether tropical, temperate, or arctic.

Their stay varies from two to three months.

Name.	Place of loading.	No. of crew.	Deaths.
George Canning	Tombo	20	0
Congress	ditto	16	1
Sappho	Scarcies	20	0
Minerva	Tombo	16	0
Crown	ditto	17	1
T. Wallace	ditto	16	0
Esther	Bance Island, S. L.	16	0
Bernard	ditto	20	0
Norval	Pappel, Sierra Leone	18	1
Corsair	Sierra Leone River	15	1
Duchess of Richmond	ditto	12	0
———	ditto	15	0
Hopewell	ditto	16	0
Rumney	Melicourie	19	1
Nautilus	ditto	19	0
Margaret	ditto	12	1
Eliza Dick	ditto	14	0
Euretta	ditto	18	0
Harriett	Bunce River	18	1
Mary	Sierra Leone River	19	0
Latona	Tombo	20	0
Alchymist	Melicourie	11	1
Rubicon	Bunce River	15	2
Doris	Melicourie	17	0
	Carried forward	399	10

Name.	Place of loading.	No. of crew.	Deaths.
	Brought forward	399	10
Maria	Melicourie	11	0
Redman	Sierra Leone River	17	0
Britannia	Tombo	12	3
St. Andrew	Scarices	19	1
Renewal	Melicourie	13	2
James Laing	Sierra Leone River	20	0
Hope	ditto	19	0
John Thomas	ditto	16	0
Bernard	Pappel, Sierra Leone	19	0
Alice	Scarcies	15	0
Suffolk	Melicourie	14	1
Huskisson	Tasso, Sierra Leone	17	0
Henry Parker	Sierra Leone River	25	0
Essequibo	Melicourie	10	1
Minerva	Pappel, Sierra Leone	16	0
William Harrington	Sierra Leone River	13	0
Lord Goderich	Melicourie	17	2
Caroline	ditto	13	2
Raikes	Tombo	15	0
W. Miles	Bunce River	26	0
Pericles	Melicourie	12	0
Numa	ditto	15	0
Martha	Scarcies	15	0
Latona	Tombo	20	0
Christiana	Melicourie	15	1
St. George	Pappel, Sierra Leone	15	0
Lady Douglas	Tombo	20	0
Little Liz	ditto	12	2
Luna	Melicourie	10	1
Iris	ditto	17	1
Alexander	Scarcies	13	1
Maria	Melicourie	11	0
Bernard	ditto	19	0
Navarino	ditto	14	1
New Eagle	Pappel, Sierra Leone	15	0
Hercules	Scarcies	13	2
T. Wallace	ditto	15	0
Ranger	ditto	13	0
Renewal	ditto	13	0
Woodbridge	Bunce	24	1
Sackville	ditto	14	0
Xenophon	Pappel, Sierra Leone	15	0
	Carried forward	1056	32

Name.	Place of loading.	No. of crew.	Deaths.
	Brought forward	1056	32
Julius Cæsar	Melicourie	13	2
Numa	Pappel, Sierra Leone	15	1
Minerva	Tombo	15	0
Laburnum	Pappel, Sierra Leone	10	0
John	Bance Island	8	1
Highlander	Sierra Leone River	16	0
Eliza	Tombo	17	1
Mary	ditto	16	1
Ann, Eliza, and Jane	ditto	14	1
Ceres	ditto	16	0
Adelina	Melicourie	12	2
Cambria	Sierra Leone River	13	0
Janus	Melicourie	11	1
Ocean	ditto	13	1
Maria	ditto	11	0
Finden	ditto	11	0
Europe	Tombo	16	0
Elizabeth	Melicourie	16	0
Francis	ditto	11	2
Jane (brig)	ditto	12	4
Economist	ditto	15	1
Julia	ditto	13	1
Jane (barque)	ditto	16	2
89 vessels.		1366	53

RECAPITULATION.

Vessels.	Place of loading.	Men.	Deaths.
17	Tombo Island	278	10
5	Bunce River	97	4
9	Scarcies River	136	4
33	Melicourie	455	31
25	Sierra Leone River	400	4
89		1366	53

Under the head of Sierra Leone River, are included Bance Island, Tasso, and Pappel, low lands lying up the fresh-water rivers of the flat marshy country, at several miles' distance from Freetown. Though, together with Tombo, within the jurisdiction of the colony, they possess few characters in common with the lofty Peninsula. At these spots occurred three of the four deaths under the head of Sierra Leone.

For every ten sailors then who die at Sierra Leone, &c.

between 19 and 20 die at the Scarcies.
55 — 36 — at Tombo.
41 — 42 — in the Bunce River.
69 — 70 — in the distant Melicourie River.

Tombo, although actually within the extent of British jurisdiction, is too distant from the Peninsula, to be included. One white man only resides on the island. He had withstood the climate, when I had the pleasure of seeing him, upwards of twenty-six years.

The Bunce River is also taken separately, for two reasons. Although close to the colony, it is in every way exposed to the malaria of the low country through which it flows; and again, because *five* vessels only cannot be assumed as the foundation for an average.

6.

Mortality amongst the officers of the Royal African corps stationed at Sierra Leone, from 1827 to June 1834.

Year.	Deaths.
1828 . . .	1
1829 . . .	0
1830 . . .	1
1831 . . .	1
1832 . . .	0
1833 . . .	1
1834* . . .	0

Total in six years and a-half, four deaths; viz. 1 Lieutenant-Colonel, 3 Ensigns.

In one or two years previously, this tolerably equable rate was disturbed by accidental causes; but the general improved tone of health, as shown in Chap. XVIII, from a variety of circumstances, has extended to the military.

Insulated cases of mortality in bygone years may be selected to startle or to maintain a prejudice. Thus, in

Year.	Died.
1827 . . .	5
1828 . . .	11

But so, in 1819, the 92nd Highland regiment, in the Island of Jamaica, suffered as follows, in *six months:*

* To June.

Officers and wives . .	32	died 14
Soldiers' wives and children	130	67
Soldiers	650	280
Total	812	361

Equal to 722 deaths out of 812 persons in one year; a proportion never approached in Sierra Leone, but again nearly equalled in Jamaica, in 1825, in the 77th regiment.

The mortality amongst the officers in our Hindoostan army for 9 years, ending December 1834, appears to be,

No. of officers on the establishment 792, died 340.*

* See United Service Journal, June 1835.

THE END.

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